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Laying the foundations for well-being in deaf children : exploring professional roles in the delivery of a deaf bilingual-bicultural education

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Laying the Foundations for Well-being in Deaf Children: Exploring professional roles in the delivery of a Deaf bilingual-bicultural education

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Abstract

The way in which the notion a *deaf child* is understood and evaluated by parents, teachers and society has a strong influence on the extent to which they can facilitate positive development and well-being in the child. Attempting to understand the deaf child within a hearing, rather than deaf framework can potentially create situations in which systems such as family and school generate expectations that deaf children cannot fulfil while, the real needs of the child remain unsatisfied. This situation has been described as *ecological dissonance.*

This research investigated three schools for the deaf in Spain that deliver education within a bilingual-bicultural framework. Research questions constituted an exploration of: (1) teachers' construction of the notion of the *deaf pupil*; (2) the potential for a cultural framework of deafness to assist teachers in their interpretations of deaf pupils.

Within a combined quantitative/qualitative research strategy, four studies were developed. Study 1 constituted an exercise in retrospective ethnography and revealed four social representations of deaf pupils, in turn describing four frameworks of understanding –the medical framework: 'deaf pupil as disabled'; the speech-centred framework: 'the deaf pupil as impaired'; the educational framework: 'deaf pupil as any other child'; the minority community framework: 'deaf pupil as Deaf'.

Study 2 analysed teachers' beliefs and attitudes towards the four identified representations of deaf pupils, using an attitude scale developed for this purpose. Results showed that while teachers predominantly operated within the educational framework in working with deaf pupils, they also drew on other frameworks, namely the cultural and speech-centred frameworks in understanding their relationship with children. In contrast, the medical framework, despite being the traditional means of understanding deafness seldom featured in teachers' description of their work.

In Study 3, focus groups allowed teachers to collectively explore the notion of the deaf pupil and issues related to pupils' education. The aims of Study 3 were thus twofold: to explore teachers' understanding of deaf pupils and to explore the processes by which teachers developed and elaborated these understandings or constructs. In short, Deaf and hearing professionals consistently displayed a tension between using Deaf and hearing frameworks of understanding and this reflected their Deaf or hearing identity and culturally different values, beliefs and experiences.

Using focus groups, Study 4 drew on principles of action research to promote a Deaf cultural framework. Vignettes depicting cultural clashes in school provided practical examples around which to explore the deaf child's school experience within different frameworks. Results suggested that teachers' professional role was clearly grounded in their identity as hearing individuals. The high level of socialisation in Deaf environments required in order to see the world through Deaf eyes emerged as desirable, but a challenge to achieve.

This research has implications for our understanding of deaf children's ecology of systems and hearing teachers' construction of the notion of the *deaf child.*

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Este trabajo está dedicado a un extraordinario grupo de maestras:
Marian, Tere, Lourdes y Rosa.

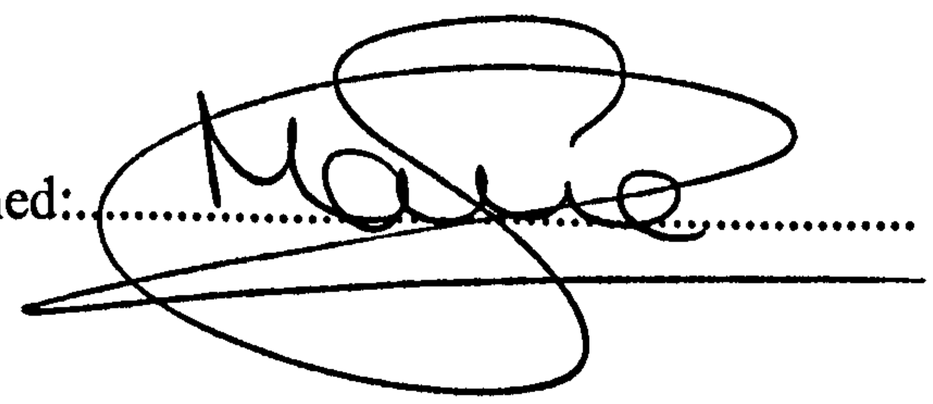
Author's Declaration

I declare that the work in this dissertation was carried out in accordance with the Regulations of the University of Bristol. The work is original except where indicated by special reference in the text and no part of the dissertation has been submitted for any other degree.

Any views expressed in the dissertation are those of the author and in no way represent those of the University of Bristol. The author has made all translations in this dissertation.

The dissertation has not been presented to any other University for examination either in the United Kingdom or overseas.

Signed:.....



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"Roberto se paró, y, poniendo la mano en el hombro de Manuel, le dijo:
-Hazme caso, porque es verdad. Si quieres hacer algo en la vida, no creas en la palabra imposible. Nada hay imposible para una voluntad enérgica."

La Busca. Pio Baroja

Chapter 1

Frameworks for the development of well-being in deaf[1] children

1.1. Introduction

This chapter seeks a comprehensive understanding of deaf children's social and emotional well-being. Bringing the literature of such a broad topic together is a difficult task. A model of well-being will be applied to the study and review of deaf children's social and emotional development. In doing so, multiple conditions identified in the literature as sources of influence on deaf children's well-being will be brought together in one single picture. In doing so, the interaction of factors within and outside the child will be considered to achieve an accurate reflection of how conditions for social and emotional development are set up. This strategy therefore enables a comprehensive understanding of deaf children's life as well as an analytical description of how elements in the life of deaf children interact to promote well-being in the deaf child.

By approaching this study of conditions for development and well-being in deaf children, there is also an aim of portraying factors affecting well-being (e.g. parenting, education, communication), as part of a complex netting of relationships surrounding the deaf child. This chapter is written with the overall aim of understanding the complexity of deaf children's social and emotional well-being, without falling into the trap of singling out particular people in children's life (i.e. the child, the parent, the teachers). Instead, the analysis is an attempt to understand conditions fostering development of deaf children.

1.2. Developing social and emotional well-being

The key to the well-being of children is probably their social and emotional development (WHO, 2003a) and life success (Calderon and Greenberg, 2003). Well-being is often seen as

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[1] Within this dissertation the phrase 'deaf child'/'deaf children' has been deliberately chosen to represent children whose nature as deaf individuals makes signed languages the most natural way of communication and deaf/visual led environment more suitable for their development. Deaf children are different from hearing impaired children in that the latter can use residual hearing to function normally in hearing led environments where hearing and speaking are the required communication channels.

the result of positive mental health experiences. The WHO (2003b) includes the following conditions for mental health in children:

- secure attachment
- a sense of purpose and direction in life
- effective coping strategies to overcome daily life challenges
- perceived controlled over life outcomes
- emotionally rewarding social relationships
- expression of positive emotion
- social integration

Although this is not an exhaustive list of conditions for mental health development, it delineates fundamental elements of children's well-being. While for most children these characteristics come naturally as a result of a nurturing environment, for other children it can prove more challenging (Schaffer, 2000). In effect, children living in dysfunctional environments have been seen to be more vulnerable in their development (Schaffer, 2000). In order to understand the impact of environments on children's well-being effectively, we need to introduce the concept of ecology. Ecology refers to processes of accommodation between the developing child and the environment, while being influenced by larger contexts and time:

> The ecology of human development involves the scientific study of the progressive mutual accommodation between an active, growing human being and the changing properties of the immediate settings in which the developing person lives, as this process is affected by relation between these settings, and by the larger contexts in which the settings are embedded, *over time*[2]. (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p.21)

In examining mental health prevention programmes for school age children, an increasing interest in factors that lie outside the child such as parenting skills or community welfare are taken into account when considering children's well-being. The use of mental health intervention programmes has increased in the last twenty years (Greenberg, Domitrovich and Bumberger, 2001 for a complete review). Development of general social and emotional cognitive skill-building, conflict resolution and decision making in the child to prevent psychopathology and violence has been the target at three levels of intervention (i.e. universal, selected and indicated) (Greenberg, Domitrovich and Bumberger, 2001; Elliot, 1998). While child-centred interventions have been the main target for mental health

[2] Italics are mine. Bronfenbrenner (1996b) included time as part of children's ecology of systems.

programmes, the ecologies in which children develop (i.e. home, school, community) have become a fundamental aspect of intervention within these programmes. One of the reasons has been that the capacity of the environment to provide social and emotional experiences and support development has become crucial in our understanding (Cowen, 1994; Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Moen, Elder and Lüscher, 1996). Clearly, environments that struggle to provide adequate developmental opportunities put children at a disadvantage.

Today multidimensional programmes involving the child, the home and the community are being favoured. Greenberg, Domitrovich and Bumberger (2001) found that programmes that addressed risk and protective factors both within the child and his/her developmental environments were more effective in developing enduring well-being in school-age children. In this respect, combined interventions that considered teacher and family behaviour, the relationships between both, and the role of the community in keeping a healthy environment (i.e. healthy norms and competent behaviour) had enhanced the success of interventions with school age children (Greenberg, Domitrovich and Bumberger, 2001). This situation draws attention to the necessary holistic and comprehensive perspective that involves children and environment in understanding children's social and emotional development.

How this might work is explored in the following model.

1.3. The bioecological model of development

The mentioned approaches in preventive practice are based on developmental-ecological models (Greenberg, Domitrovich and Bumberger, 2001). The underpinning of this is the work of Bronfenbrenner (1979; 1996b).

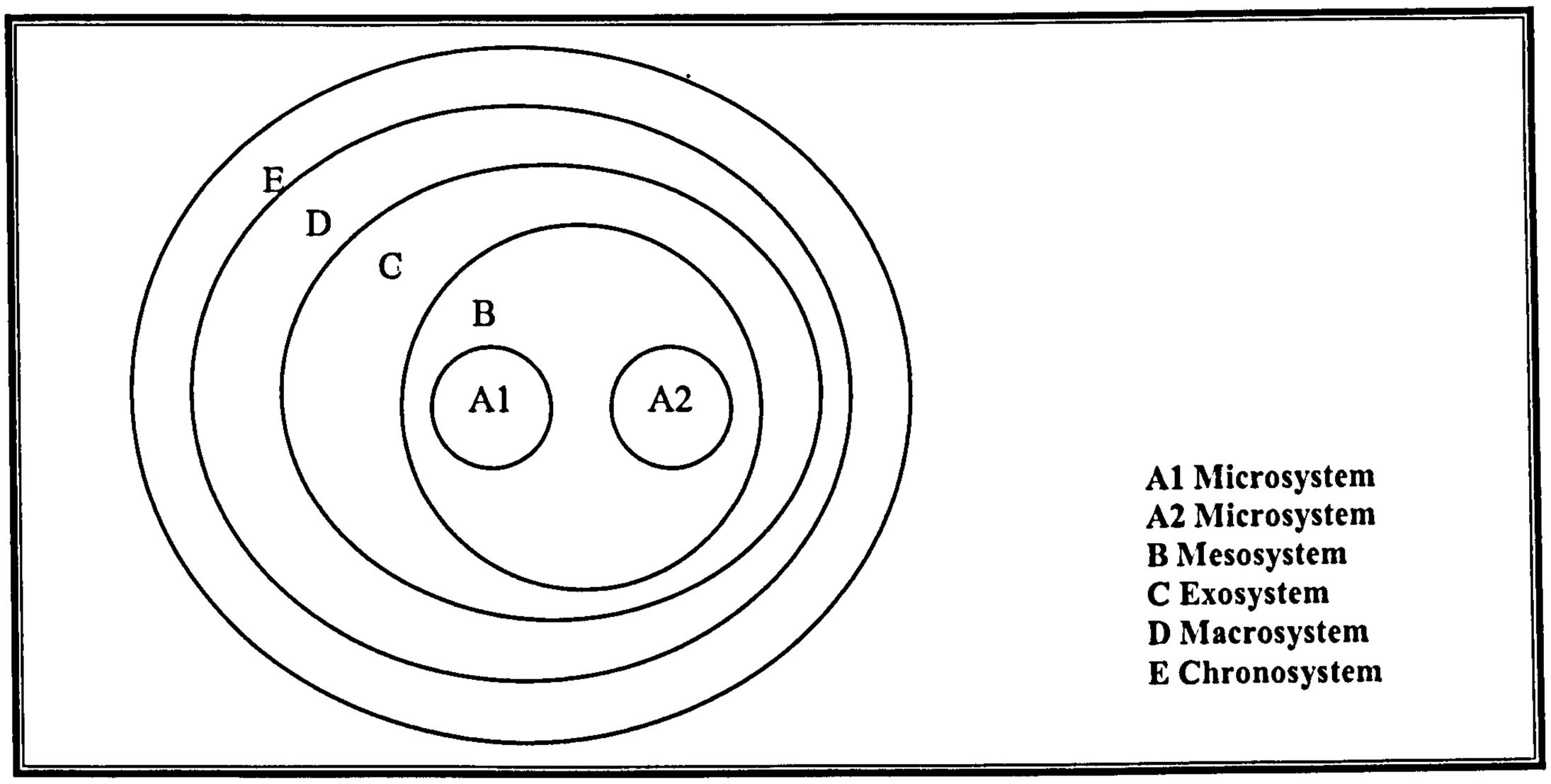
Bronfenbrenner's (1996b) *Bioecological model of Human Development* analyses the ecology of human development- that is, the understanding of human development in the context of the different environments in which he/she is immersed. Within this theory, environments are perceived as a constructed reality, rather than as their objective appearance.

Children are immersed in other social systems besides the family, school and the peer group. Distal and proximal social systems (i.e. at varying social and physical distances) in the life of the child impinge on the development (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Social and cultural influences filter through the outer systems to the settings in which the child is directly immersed, shaping the properties and processes that embody an ecology. Bronfenbrenner (1996b, p.620)

suggests 'proximal processes' are increasingly complex reciprocal interactions between an active and evolving biopsychological child and significant others, objects or symbols in the immediate environments.

The ecology of children's development is complicated by the range of interactive systems, and proximal processes between the child and his/her social contexts (Bronfenbrenner, 1996b).

Figure 1. 1: Bronfenbrenner's model of ecological systems (1979;1996b)



- *The chronosystem*

The 'chronosystem' captures all the interacting elements over time which affect the child. The historical period in which children develop has a powerful effect on the overall ecology – that is, arising from the nature of environment, shaping proximal processes and finally producing an impact in the child. Elder (1974, in Elder, 1996) reports a study of two cohorts of children born at the beginning and end of the 1920s. Both cohorts lived through the Great Depression. The younger cohort –more dependent on a stressed family environment, due to the economic crisis – was at greater risk of developmental problems such as emotional distress and helplessness (this was especially true in the case of boys). The historical period has social, political, economical and technological conditions that shape the ecology of development by affecting elements of social settings- for instance, during the Great Depression Elder noted shifts within family dynamics. As a result of the

Depression, fathers (often unemployed) lost their status in the eyes of the children, whereas mothers' perceived importance increased.

- *The macrosystem*

The belief system, ideologies and values that lie at the roots of a culture at a particular historical moment are the 'macrosystem' (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). These belief systems include role expectations that influence other systems and impinge on the individual's self-definition (Clausen, 1996). These role expectations and social demands are rooted in social representations of what individuals are like in a specific culture, space and time.

- *The exo and mesosystems*

The next two succeeding levels are the 'exosystem' and the 'mesosystem'. The 'exosystem' referred to settings where children are not directly involved but these still have an influence on children's lives; the 'mesosystem' appealed to a system of microsystems that comprised the interrelations among two or more settings in which children were developing such as the family and the school. Both these systems are influential. Steinberg et al.'s (1996) study illustrated these influences. Democratic parenting styles fostered better-adjusted and more socially competent adolescents (Steinberg et al, 1996). However, analysis of elements in the exosystem (the community in which the family lived) and mesosystem (parents-peer group relationship) showed that, while in certain ecologies (such as the community and peer group) influence on adolescents may overwhelm the beneficial effects of authoritative parenting in the home. In other contexts, these systems contributed positively to adolescents' development by balancing the negative effects of authoritative parenting styles.

- *The microsystems*

Children's most immediate developmental context is the family, and after the first years of life, school becomes a major developmental experience in the child's life. Family and school ('microsystem') provide diversity of life experience (e.g. exploring, communicating, observing, and playing) and are direct ecologies of children's development. Within this theory, children's development is understood as the result of proximal processes. These ecologies of development may also be influenced by distal systems already presented.

- *Proximal processes, values and beliefs*

Reflecting on significant others' participation in proximal processes, the role of beliefs and knowledge is seen as an essential part of an ecology of development. Tulkin's (1977) study suggested that mothers' beliefs about babies' capabilities and their own abilities as mothers, could determine the developmental opportunities provided to the child in middle and lower-class ecologies. In effect, middle class mothers had higher interaction rates and perceived abilities and higher perceived ability for both their babies and themselves; meanwhile their working class counterparts did not show similar correlations. This suggested that the value orientation of the mother as a significant other has a potent impact on the development of the child (Bronfenbrenner, 1996b).

While Tulkin's study focused on the impact that mothers' values and beliefs about their babies and themselves as carers had on proximal processes (i.e. developmental ecology) and on their children's cognitive development, Lüscher (1996) pinned down the influence that values, knowledge and beliefs were likely to have on the socialisation process of the child. Lüscher (1996) points out an essential strategy in the upbringing of a child – parents' or carers' interpretations of child actions. From birth, parents naturally attempt to interpret babies' behaviour in order to meet their needs and establish rapport and communication (Durkin, 1995). In doing so, parents will use their values, beliefs and knowledge to perform their roles as parents. Their belief systems will influence the way they structure environments, set up communication experiences and play routines. In other words, the different proximal processes define the ecology of their child development. Lüscher (1996) suggests that knowledge and beliefs of carers are inherent in the notion of 'proximal processes':

> The notion of "proximal processes," as suggested by Bronfenbrenner, is meant particularly to clarify the interplay between the biological equipment and the immediate social situations that frame the interactions between a child and her or his closest caregiver, particularly the mother or father. I suggest that it would be fruitful to incorporate knowledge and beliefs into the conceptualisation of proximal processes (Lüscher, 1996, p. 564)

Lüscher (1996) acknowledges that the relation between beliefs and behaviour is often seen as weak (Tajfel and Fraser, 1978). However, in developing an awareness of one's own perspectives, individuals develop personal identities (i.e. self) from where to look into their experiences and to organise their environment. In doing so, their values,

knowledge and beliefs influence their interpretation of children's behaviours, expectations and so on. Bronfenbrenner (1993 in Lüscher, 1996), in this regard, explains that belief systems and knowledge about human development and how it takes place are major determinants of proximal processes' effects and contents. These systems of beliefs exist on three different levels: in a broader socio-cultural and institutional structures of society; these are then transmitted to the parents, teachers, peers and significant others in the immediate settings of development; and finally through proximal processes are passed on to the child, shaping their development. Knowledge and beliefs are used in interpreting and defining situations individually and collectively by drawing on previous experience, knowledge and beliefs, and taking into account representations of themselves and how individuals want to or are forced to, belong to a chronological era. As we will see, Lüscher's (1996) contribution to the notion of proximal processes is especially interesting in understanding and exploring deaf children's experience in the family.

In summary, at home and at school, the values, beliefs and attitudes of significant others in the life of children and their interpersonal relationships ('proximal processes') are at the heart of an ecology of development. Thus, the developmental outcomes in the child arise from proximal processes. We need to acknowledge the impact that beliefs grounded on wider political, social, and cultural context may have on proximal processes.

1.4. The notion of well-being: four 'qualities of life'

In reviewing the literature about 'quality of life, 'well-being' and 'happiness', Veenhoven (2000) observed two main problems: firstly, that these terms are often used in different ways (i.e. sometimes as general terms for all that is good; other times to denote special merits); secondly, that the use of the terms in a general sense suggested that there was something such as an 'overall' quality of life, resulting from the meaningful addition of specific merits. Both problems were seen by Veenhoven (2000) as impeding our understanding of the notions of 'well-being', 'quality of life' and 'happiness'. In an attempt to clarify the meanings of quality of life Veenhoven (2000) developed an analytic tool that not only illuminates the meaning of these terms, but also can assist us in the analysis of individuals' well-being.

Veenhoven's (2000) model relies on two basic ideas:

- 'Well-being', 'quality of life' and 'happiness' are evaluating an individual's human life. To do so, a significant difference needs to be established between opportunities

of good life or 'life-chances' (i.e. potentiality) and good life in itself or 'life-results' (i.e. actuality). While life opportunities and outcomes are related, they are certainly not the same.

- Life (i.e. opportunities and outcomes) is influenced by qualities/conditions that lie both within the environment ('outer qualities') and the individual ('inner qualities').

The interaction of *life* and *qualities* (i.e. life chances vs. life results; and outer qualities vs. inner qualities) creates a model of 'four qualities of life' (see Table 1.1):

Table 1. 1.: Veenhoven's (2000) model of qualities of life

	Outer qualities	**Inner qualities**
Life chances	Livability of the environment	Life-ability of the person
Life results	Utility of life	Appreciation of life

The model describes two kinds of life-chances (i.e. potentiality for good life):

- Livability of the environment: good living conditions but not limited to material elements of the environment (i.e. opportunities in one's environment).
- Life-abilities of the person: how well equipped one person is to cope with the problems of life (i.e. opportunities in one's self).

Similarly, two kinds of life-results (i.e. actuality of good life itself) are considered:

- Utility of life: value that others in our environment attach to our life, although might not be acknowledged by the individual him/herself (i.e. outer worth of a life).
- Appreciation of life: value that one attaches to one's own life (i.e. inner worth of life).

In an attempt to present a comprehensive analysis of deaf children's well-being, all four qualities of life described by Veenhoven (2000) are considered, in turn.

1.5. 'Livability of the environment' for deaf children

Children's well-being can be promoted within the social environments (i.e. home, school, community) in which opportunities for growth and development of a solid sense of self are provided (Schaffer, 2000; Durkin, 1995).

Certain elements related to family, school and community impact children's well-being. These will be described, in turn.

1.5.1. The family

Most deaf children are born to hearing parents (nearly 90%) with little or no experience of deafness prior the birth of their deaf children. Deaf parents are aware of what being deaf means e.g. potential for communicating with others, abilities to learn, and often negative representations of deaf people in hearing society (Padden and Humphries, 1988). Clearly, these deaf parents have a closer and more accurate view of what being deaf means.

In a hearing family the child is likely to grow up and become a member of a minority culture (i.e. Deaf culture) to which no other member of his/her family (i.e. hearing family) belongs (Greenberg, 2000). This situation forces hearing parents to discover the world of deaf children and adults (e.g. existence of a Deaf community, communication alternatives and schooling options) at the same time as they have to bring up their deaf child (Gregory, 1976; Young, 1995; Erting, 1994). However, often parents choose to deny deafness and ignore the community (Gregory, Bishop and Sheldon, 1995).

In contrast, deaf children of deaf parents are born in a family system in which adults share membership with the child. In this case, deaf children find Deaf role models with whom they can identify and learn a culture (i.e. providing language, values, beliefs) (Erting, 1994; Lane, 1993; Padden and Humphries, 1988).

Perhaps unsurprisingly, three fundamental elements to proximal processes within the family have been clearly considered in the study of deaf children development at home:

- Communication
- Attributions and expectations

- Acceptance of deafness in the child

- *Communication*

Communication at home is essential in the development of social understanding and skills, but also to develop progressively an image of self (Schaffer, 2000; Durkin, 1995). These developments in the child are seen as a result of language exposure, direct modelling and incidental learning (Garton, 1994).

The arrival of a deaf child forces a re-think in communication in some families (Gregory, 1976), as hearing parents would have expected their child to hear and to speak as part of their natural parenting (Hindley, 2000). Choices and decisions in regard to language use in the family need to be taken (Gregory and Knight, 1998; Schirmer, 2001). Most parents with little information about what being deaf means (Erting, 1994), must decide which communication mode would best suit their deaf child's and family's needs. There are several alternatives:

- Oral communication, use a spoken language.
- Manual communication, use a sign language.
- Pidgin communication, designates the use of signs following the order of the spoken language with the inclusion of morphemes and speech/mouthing simultaneously to make speech more accessible to the deaf child (Schirmer, 2001).

Spoken language is used by some parents in the hope that it creates communication with deaf children. Deaf children are expected to try to use speech-reading and residual hearing. Although spoken language is a straightforward choice for hearing parents, many deaf children do not learn spoken languages through hearing. This may produce cognitive, social and emotional developmental delays in the child which in turn, have implications for well-being (Greenberg and Kusché, 1989; Schirmer, 2001).

Restricted social experiences resulting from lack of access to information within the family gives deaf children fewer opportunities to learn from events in others' lives. Communication is one of the areas in which parents' acceptance and understanding of deafness is revealed. That is, parents who pushed children towards being normal

by using oral communication and rejecting sign language and contact with other deaf individuals were likely to convey messages of rejection to the child. As a result, deaf children were likely to feel uncomfortable with their deafness and find it difficult to hold a positive image of self (Gregory, 1993; Gregory, Bishop and Sheldon, 1995). In contrast, parents' efforts to communicate visually and provide accessible relationships within the family were often interpreted by children as evidence of love and respect (Gregory, Bishop and Sheldon, 1995).

- *Attributions and expectations about the deaf child's development*

Parents' beliefs and knowledge influences the way they structure the family system to respond to their children's needs (Lüscher, 1996). Home ecologies are shaped by parents' knowledge and beliefs about deafness and deaf people. Communication in the family is maybe the most evident example: for hearing families, relationships within the family are constructed from an audio/oral way of experiencing life. In contrast, in deaf families life is constructed visual/manually, and therefore communication among members of the family is oriented towards a visually oriented way of life. For instance, hearing parents might contemplate physical contact with deaf children to initiate communication as a burden or a limitation (Young, Griggs, and Sutherland, 2000); however, for a D/deaf parent this is does not stand out as negative nor positive, but as the way visual communication is carried out (Young, Griggs, and Sutherland, 2000).

While communication is a clear example to illustrate how different beliefs and values impact on daily life situations, there are other less obvious ways in which parents' beliefs and values influence fundamental elements of their home ecologies e.g. proximal processes. Proximal processes are based on parents' expectations and interpretations of their children's behaviour (Durkin, 1995). Parents' interpretations and expectations in relation to the deaf child are influenced by their beliefs, values and experience (Durkin, 1995). A good example to illustrate this situation is parents' interpretations of deaf toddlers communicative behaviour. Kyle and Woll (1985) found that while hearing parents were unlikely to assign meaning to gestures produced by their children, Deaf parents were likely to see these as early signs. Values and beliefs of what constitutes language and communication were impacting on parents' interaction with their toddlers.

The study of Deaf mothers has identified differences in parenting strategies (Kyle and Woll, 1985) which may reflect different values and beliefs about deaf life. Early intervention programmes ought to include accurate information about what it means to be deaf as well as D/deaf ways of looking at and understanding life i.e. to aid parents' interpretations and to give value to visual/manual communication and awareness about interaction routines.

Increasingly, early intervention programmes have introduced sign language and D/deaf adults, with the objective of facilitating communication between the child and other family members in the early years and providing parents with competent Deaf role models (Kyle and Sutherland, 1993; Young, 1995; Sass-Lehrer and Bodner-Johnson, 2003). There is evidence to suggest that D/deaf adults' collaboration with hearing parents of deaf infants (e.g. SKI*HI institute, Kendall Demonstration Elementary School Parent –Infant programme, Deaf Children at Home) provides parents with opportunities to develop new resources to communicate and relate to their deaf child, at the same time promoting positive perceptions of deafness and Deaf culture among family members (Watkins et al., 1998). The introduction of Deaf role models in early intervention programmes clearly benefits families' functioning and sense of well-being (Sass-Lehrer and Bodner-Johnson, 2003). While early intervention programmes have come a long way, crucial components in developing an accurate understanding of cultural deafness -namely, Deaf culture often remains obscured (Stredler-Brouwn and Arehart, 2000).

- *Acceptance of deafness in the child*

  A final element that needs to be considered in the study of home ecologies is linked with the emotional livability of the family. Parental acceptance of their children as deaf individuals is essential to foster in the child a feeling of self-esteem (Pervin, 2001). In exploring parental acceptance Erting (1994) described that while some deaf parents looked forward to having a deaf child, others were not so keen as a result of their awareness of barriers in the hearing world. However, for most of them having deaf children was an overall positive experience (i.e. ease of communication, celebration of family history without significant emotional distress) (Padden and Humphries, 1988; Erting, 1994). The deaf child was welcomed into the family without significant emotional distress.

In contrast, hearing parents' acceptance of a deaf child is not straightforward. For them, deafness often comes as a disappointment and a distressing experience (Erting, 1994; Luterman, 1987; Gregory, 1976) as for them being deaf is a disability. Parents have little information about deaf people and in most cases do not command a signed language to communicate with the child. Acceptance is challenging, however research indicates that providing alternative frameworks of understanding (e.g. bicultural perspective) (Young, 1995) as well as experiences with their deaf children (i.e. discovering sign language) promotes family adjustment and acceptance (Spencer, 2000; Gregory, Bishop and Sheldon, 1995; Beazley and Moore, 1995).

Home ecologies rely on information, beliefs and values about life that reflects the way one experiences it.

1.5.2. School

While the family is the principal system in which deaf children grow, the school (where the child spends perhaps 30% of waking time) is claimed to play an important role in their social and emotional development. If the child is communication - deprived at home, then the relative significance of school increases exponentially- i.e. 30% contact time equates to 90% meaningful interaction.

Besides academic achievement, two other elements have been commonly studied when considering deaf children's development: on the one hand, school placement; on the other, communication in school.

- *School setting*

In the past deaf children stayed in residential schools. Current integration policies offer a wider variety of placements. Nowadays, deaf children can be placed in the ordinary school with a wide range of (supposed relevant) resources to enable an educational response that is adequate to their needs (i.e. mainstream) (Andrews, Leigh and Weiner, 2004). At school, for the first time, the deaf child may interact with a peer and develop communication (Corker, 1996). This places this experience as critical to self-esteem. For instance, peer contact offered in residential school is seen by many as a source of esteem and connectedness with others which encourages positive feelings of well-being (Craddock, 1991; Mason, 1991; Ladd, 2003) and some deaf children who were schooled in isolation from other deaf peers felt

unsatisfied (e.g. lonely, isolated) and sought peers contact in the Deaf community later on in life (Gregory, Bishop and Sheldon, 1995; Ladd, 1991).

- *Communication policies*

Schirmer (2001) identified three approaches:

- oral/aural (using speech)
- bilingual (using sign language and spoken or written language)
- total communication (using pidgin communication)

which have an impact on pupils' self-esteem in two ways:

Firstly, ease of communication in school as well as within the family has been repeatedly identified as a major factor influencing deaf children's well-being. Hindley (2000) suggests that issues of accessibility and ease in communication can be considered as risk factors to developing a positive image as a deaf individual. Deaf children and young adults when asked for their opinions about the importance of communication for them, support the notion that satisfying communication experiences at home, at school and within peer groups is a key element for deaf children's self-esteem, identity and well-being (Sheridan, 2001; Gregory, Bishop and Sheldon, 1995).

Secondly, deaf children's achievement in school is known to enhance self-esteem (Schirmer, 2001). Communication policy directly impacts on the degree to which school experiences are accessible to the child providing opportunities for success and enhanced self-esteem. Communication methods that are natural to the child increase the child's understanding of, and opportunities for success at school, ultimately impacting on their self-esteem (Hindley, 2000).

The method chosen and the child's success in this can be described as a supporting ecology that has positive outcomes in self-esteem. However, our understanding of the school ecology is still limited, as there is little research about teachers' attributions and expectations about deaf pupils that are crucial elements of the ecology of the school. The school is mainly organised by hearing adults who, as in the case of the family, are likely to generate expectations and attributions that are not in keeping

order with the deaf child's experience. In considering the livability of school, this crucial element of the ecology has not been yet explored.

1.5.3. Peer groups and the Deaf community

The Deaf community represents a very diverse entity with demographic, audiological, linguistic, political and social dimensions (Andrews, Leigh and Weiner, 2004; Ladd and Woll, 2003). A number of studies on deaf gay, black, Jewish, Hispanic, Asian and Native American communities have raised deaf people's awareness about the existence of 'subcommunities' within the Deaf community (Ladd and Woll, 2003). While for some deaf individuals membership in the Deaf community does not provide social or personal benefits and a preference for identification with hearing groups is chosen (Bat-Chava, 2000), for others the Deaf community represents a space in which they can share a unique Deaf perspective, based on common background and experiences with other deaf peers (Andrews, Leigh and Weiner, 2004).

Deaf culture is hence transmitted through peer socialisation (Padden and Humphries, 1988; Andrews, Leigh and Weiner, 2004). Even without the presence of D/deaf adults in Deaf education (which has been usual), the school is valued because of the peer contact.

Such contacts increase in significance in adolescence where deaf teenagers will actively seek contact with other deaf peers. At this age many will discover sign language and Deaf clubs that will have an important impact on their identity and emotional development. In effect, at some point of life many deaf children will move emotionally from their group of permanence (for most hearing families), to their group of reference (a community of deaf peers) (Lane, 1993).

Likewise in D/deaf families, the Deaf community offers deaf children an ecology of development, in which proximal processes are informed and guided by deaf adults sensitive to the needs of the deaf child holistically (Ladd, 2003. Reed, 2001). Deaf community is seen to offer an environment which meets the natural needs of the deaf child: it provides other deaf adults with whom children can identify and a visual-led environment in which not only communication, but also social relationships are in accordance with the nature of deaf children (Hindley, 2000; Greenberg, 2000;

Gregory, Bishop and Sheldon, 1995; Steinberg, 2000). Deaf identities, enhanced in the Deaf community through contact with other deaf peers, provide deaf children with a positive definition of what being deaf means; that is, one in which being deaf is based on an experience of life - cultural minority community with own language and values (Charrow and Wilbur, 1989)-, rather than the pathologised characterisation imposed by hearing people (deaf people as people that cannot hear) (Lane, 1993).

In summary, 'livability of the environment' is the extent to which the values and beliefs underpinning systems such as family, school and peers provide supportive ecologies for deaf children to develop. Ecologies constructed around Deaf beliefs and values (e.g. Deaf families) offer deaf children better opportunities to develop/experience well-being as proximal processes rely on accurate interpretations of what being deaf means. Systems based on hearing values and beliefs clearly put deaf children in a more vulnerable position, debilitating their chances of developing/experiencing well-being.

1.6. 'Life-abilities of the person'

Children's development provides them with resources such as cognitive, linguistic and social emotional capacities that help them form images of self with which to face life's challenges.

Disability is strongly portrayed in our society as a deleterious condition that limits children's chances to achieve a positive and fulfilling life (Veenhoven, 2000). However, research carried out with individuals labelled by society as 'disabled' often has different accounts of what limits their potential for growth and well-being. Biological characteristics may force alternative lifestyles. However, these are not necessarily seen as limiting by the individuals (Davis, 1997).

Children's potential to cope in life can be seen as the result of their representations of self, emotional and motivational awareness and the management of these affective states (Gardner, 1993; Goleman, 1996; Salovey and Sluyter, 1997; Dweck, 1999). While cognitive ability was traditionally taken as a main indicator for children's potential to cope, 'personal intelligence' (i.e. identification of emotions within him/herself and the interpretation of others' behaviour, motives and emotions) has lately emerged as a crucial factor for children's achievement and satisfaction (Gardner, 1993; Slovey and Sluyter, 1997; Dweck, 1999).

Feelings and emotions play a relevant role in children's self-representations of their abilities (Gardner, 1993; Salovey and Sluyter, 1997). Salovey and Sluyter (1997) found that children's coping strategies are determined not only by their perceptions of self, but also by the feelings triggered in experiencing their self.

In exploring deaf children's 'life-abilities', five factors can be identified in the literature:

- Experiencing life visually
- Making sense of deafness
- Cognitive abilities
- Linguistic abilities
- Social and emotional abilities

1.6.1. Experiencing life visually

Deaf children have a visual experience of life (Lane, 1993). They grow up understanding life in visual terms. Therefore vision influences greatly communication and deaf children's lifestyles. Deaf children perceive what is around them visually, and they accumulate these visual experiences into a visual memory that they use to think, communicate, problem-solve and generally relate to other people (Andrews, Leigh and Weiner, 2004). In this sense Andrews, Leigh and Weiner, (2004) observed that deaf children's visual experience of life sets up fundamental differences in the way they acquire culture. Deaf children, as a result of that mainly visual experience, grow up to use their expressions, spatial relationships of signs, body movement and touch far more than hearing people do in everyday interaction. There are several examples that can illustrate the importance of a visual experience of life. For instance, the development of a language that accommodates to their visual orientations is a rather explicit example; however, other implications might be less obvious. For example, Deaf mothers have been observed to situate their young children in a place where doors are easily within the child's visual scope. In this way, Deaf mothers make sure that deaf children can be aware of people coming in and out of the room using their vision. Deaf parents relate with their deaf children in a way that makes the child's visual experience significant to the child by using facial expression, body language and gesture, as well as positioning self and objects in the child's visual field (Mohay, 2000; Koester, Papousek and Smith-Gray, 2000).

1.6.2. Making sense of deafness

In reflecting on their childhood experiences, deaf adults have clarified how deaf children might start making sense of their deafness. However this is a field that remains vastly unexplored. The deaf child lives his/her life as a set of experiences. As a child, he/she has no points of reference for what life or being a child means. While this is commonly described by deaf children who have lived within Deaf and hearing environments, their gradual realisation of slight differences from others around them is emotionally different: members of Deaf families learn that as one more fact of life (Padden and Humphries, 1988), while others in hearing environments might go through a painful process of denial, misattributions, loneliness and sadness (Ladd, 1991).

1.6.3. Deaf children's cognitive abilities

Intelligence of deaf children is reckoned to be the same as that of hearing children in non-verbal terms (Mac Sweeney, 1998; Marschark, 1993; Greenberg and Kusché, 1989); however, considerable delay is found in theory of mind (Peterson and Siegal, 1995; Lundly, 2002; Ardura et al, 2003), except those in Deaf families who have been found to do better than hearing counterparts (Courtin, 2000). Differences in cognitive processing styles have been suggested, but this matter still remains unclear (Marschark, 1993). Cognitive abilities when viewed from a world perspective are limited in deaf children – while cognitive potential is not.

1.6.4. Deaf children's linguistic abilities

There is sufficient evidence of deaf children in Deaf families showing normal language ability (in sign language) for us to state categorically that it is not the deaf state which produces a language problem (Kyle and Woll, 1988). Instead, it is the mis-match in communicative patterns – i.e. the inaccessibility to linguistic experiences provided mainly in spoken language or basic sign language at home and at school - which delays or denies language (Calderon and Greenberg, 2003). As in the case of intelligence, linguistic delays are more accurately explained by limitations within the environment, rather than potential within the deaf child (Kyle and Woll, 1985; Calderon and Greenberg, 2003).

1.6.5. Deaf children's social and emotional abilities

The suggestion of typical personality patterns in deaf children that generate greater impulsivity, egocentricity, social immaturity and poor concept of self (Basilier, 1964)

has been now rejected by the scientific community. Lack of opportunities to participate of social life resulting from barriers within the systems (e.g. language/communication, and social attitudes towards deafness) are regarded as major determinants of deaf children's social and emotional development (Hindley, 2000; Schlesinger and Meadow, 1972). The school environment has been found to be an important determinant of the children's self-esteem in adulthood.

Self-esteem and a sense of well-being in deaf individuals have been found to be related to the development of culturally Deaf and bicultural identities (Bat-Chava, 2000; Jambor and Elliot, 2005). Group identification, rather than membership alone, seems to be key to deaf children's emotional well-being (Bat-Chava, 1994). That is, living a Deaf oriented life (e.g. using sign language, engaging with Deaf community) and not just 'being deaf' is what provides a feeling of self-esteem. Pride is a collective experience that impacts on the individual's self-esteem. Young deaf people (children and adolescents) who have few opportunities to get involved in the Deaf community and who therefore identify with an audiological label of deafness rather than one which implies any cultural affiliation are more likely to passively accept the stigmatisation (Bat-Chava, 1994). However, when families and schools are Deaf-oriented (e.g. positive attitudes towards deaf people, use sign language, encourage ties with the Deaf community) deaf children's group identification is promoted and their self-esteem is protected from the stigmatisation (Bat-Chava, 1994). This evidence suggests that psychosocial as well as the ecological variables influence self-esteem, and reinforces the importance of considering both when understanding deaf children's social and emotional development.

Summing up, life-ability of deaf children is the potential that deaf children have to exploit the opportunities within the systems. There is categorical evidence to suggest that conditions within the ecologies (e.g. home, school, community) generate delays of deaf children's development of capabilities and therefore in their life-ability.

1.7. 'Utility of life':

Within Veenhoven's (2000) model, 'utility of life' refers to the value that others attribute to one's life- that is, the worth or meaning of one's life for others. The 'utility of life' constitutes a philosophical reflection about life and its value/meaning. The way we understand others and the meaning of their lives not only constitutes a standard for well-being, but it is going to

have significant implications for the livability of the environments (i.e. that have a direct effect on individuals' chances of experiencing well-being).

Narratives of deaf children and deaf people have portrayed 'deafness' in multiple ways. For some, 'deafness' is a disability that limits individuals' life chances (Marschark, 1993); for others, deafness is a taken for granted experience with no particular value, solely salient when meeting hearing people that cannot sign (Padden and Humphries, 1988).

1.7.1. A hearing evaluation of deaf life

Deafness is a medical condition resulting from major infections, illnesses or genetic syndromes that were unsuccessfully cured or prevented (e.g. meningitis, rubella or genetic transmission) (Andrews, Leigh and Weiner, 2004; Schirmer, 2001). Deafness is seen as a negative deviation from the desirable hearing model, perceived as a stigmatised condition in the world to which they belong:

> All three categories of stigma are ascribed to deaf people. Physically they are judged defective; this is commonly taken to give rise to undesirable character traits, such as concreteness of thought and impulsive behaviour. Hearing people may also view deaf people as clannish-even, indeed, an undesirable world apart, social deviants... (Lane, 1993, p.7)

From a hearing perspective, a deaf life is one that is not desirable for the child as deaf individuals are seen to have diminished abilities and limited potential to succeed in life (e.g. lower intelligence and language difficulties) (Ladd, 2003; Lane, 1993; Kannapell, 1993).

A deaf life is also conceptualised within a social model of disability. Within this model, disability is separated from impairment. The creation of disability is attributed to the dominant sociocultural environment. Deafness is seen as an individual impairment, framed largely by medical categories and terminology. In contrast, the lack of access to visually produced information embodies the disability. Removing communication and information barriers in society might counter the disability, however impairment still remains (Corker, 1998). In this context the language of deaf people is regarded as a special need, ultimately easing communication barriers (Corker, 1993). Although the social model introduces a significant shift in the traditional understanding of deafness, it still reinforces the notion of the dis-ability

rather than embracing the values and abilities of those who experience life in a Deaf way (Corker, 1993).

1.7.2. A Deaf evaluation of deaf life

For deaf people the meaning of a 'deaf life' has multiple interpretations and different values. For some Deaf people a 'deaf life' does not have more or less transcendence than a hearing life. Within a culturally Deaf perspective, they see that deaf individuals belong to a cultural community (i.e. Deaf community), own a language and culture and have similar abilities and potentialities as hearing people to achieve in life (i.e. humanistic perspective)(Kannapell, 1993). Within this context, the life of a deaf person/child does not denote any extraordinary value/meaning (Padden and Humphries, 1988).

Pathological views of deafness, as the one presented in Section 1.7.1, have been seen to have deleterious consequences as deaf individuals' lives have been devalued (Ladd, 2003; Lane, 1993; Kannapell, 1993). As a result, pathological representations have promoted lower social expectations for deaf individuals and offered deaf individuals a limited vision of themselves and their lives (Kannapell, 1993). This has led some deaf people to evaluate their lives as deaf individuals as a negative experience shaped by a feeling of inferiority and failure ('pathologised self' (Lane, 1993)) (Ridgeway, 1998).

To summarise, 'utility of life' is the meaning that being deaf has for D/deaf and hearing people. The values and beliefs that we ascribe to a 'deaf life' constitute the utility of a deaf person for others. As seen, hearing and Deaf interpretations of a 'deaf life/person' are radically different. These evaluations impact home, school and community ecologies (e.g. communication, acceptance, expectations and attributions) (see Section 1.5).

1.8. Children's 'life appreciation'

Children's appreciation of life illustrates children's positive evaluation of their life and of themselves as individuals. Self-esteem is an indicator of children's subjective well-being and appreciation of themselves (Bisquerra, 2000).

As the infant bonds with a parent, he/she enters the world of relationship - a key to the development of self-esteem (Durkin, 1995; Schaffer, 2000). This encompasses (Durkin, 1995):

- what children see themselves to be (i.e. concept of self),
- how they want to be like (i.e. ideal self),
- and feelings of worthiness and esteem towards their construction of self (self-esteem).

Self-esteem compares self-concept with ideal self (Durkin, 1995, Schaffer, 2000). The convergence of these two social constructs within the child, namely self-concept and ideal-self, will produce in the child satisfaction, self-esteem and confidence (Schaffer, 2000; Durkin, 1995).

Representations of self are dependent upon interaction with others around the child. Festinger (1980) in the Theory of Social Comparison explained how the self-concept is shaped by comparison between the child and others. These comparisons are done by children themselves and others around them. Through others' judgements, children will find out about their scholastic and athletic abilities, social competence, physical appearance and behavioural conduct and will attach labels used by significant others to describe themselves (Coopersmith, 1967). These fluid self-representations will change in interaction with others and will become more independent of others' evaluations (Marcia, 1994).

1.8.1. Exploring deaf children's subjective well-being

Hearing status, family environment, school environment and group identification have been studied to understand self-esteem development (Schirmer, 2001). Some research projects have attempted to describe deaf children's self-esteem by using teachers' and parents' self-report instruments to asses children's self-esteem and self-concept (Greenberg and Kusché, 1989 for a review). Current technological developments and increasing use of sign language in clinical settings, are enabling assessment using sign language by Deaf and hearing professionals with native sign language skills. This situation is increasingly allowing deaf children to self-report on their well-being (Holzinger and Fellinger, 2004; Van Gent, 2004; Mejstad, 2004; Byrne, 2001). However, deaf children are still found to be more vulnerable to low self-esteem, as a result of life conditions already considered in Sections 1.5 and 1.7.

Despite recent improvements, little space has been granted to deaf children to explain in their own terms what makes them feel good about themselves. Some studies have attempted to understand deaf children's well-being by looking retrospectively into deaf young adults' and adults' childhood experiences (Corker, 1996; Gregory, Bishop and Sheldon, 1995). Results suggest that while deaf individuals grow up to accept and appreciate who they are, they acknowledge painful and negative experiences at school and at home that have contributed to negative feelings towards themselves. These feelings had impeded at times healthy identity transitions (Corker, 1996) and had cultivated negative feelings towards themselves as deaf individuals (Gregory, Bishop and Sheldon, 1995).

In contrast different accounts of deaf children's childhood experiences and well-being have been collected by ethnographic researchers (Sheridan, 2001; West, 2001). Sheridan (2001) in a study of seven deaf children from multiple family backgrounds and school settings concluded that deaf children had many positive experiences, relationship, self-perceptions and expectations for themselves as well as healthy coping styles (Sheridan, 2001).

Children in this study perceived their families as loving and caring, despite parents worries about their children and communication issues, especially in hearing homes. In relation to life at school, positive and negative experiences were lived by children, regardless of the type of school settings and communication policies. Deaf children had, nevertheless, developed ways of coping to make environments accessible and to deal with daily challenges (Sheridan, 2001).

Children appeared to have a positive sense of well-being, despite the many challenges that they had to face on a daily basis. In telling their stories children challenged traditional beliefs about the deleterious effects of deafness on children's life satisfaction. For six out of seven children being deaf, in itself, was not an element of distress; and responsibility in negotiating communication was seen as shared with others. Deaf children in the study showed that they could be happy, intelligent and fully functioning and contributing members of society, provided effective language and communication at home and school (Sheridan, 2001).

> Deaf children's resilience is a major component influencing their subjective well-being. Supportive environments at home and at school, in which they can assert themselves as deaf children, provide them with a secure space to develop creative coping strategies to deal with challenges in their way. Despite obstacles in life, deaf children will be able to feel happy and fulfilled.

To sum up, 'appreciation of life' is the extent to which deaf children feel satisfied with their lives. While mental heath studies contribute to our understanding of deaf children's life satisfaction, our understanding of deaf children's subjective well-being as considered by children themselves stills needs to be explored in more detail.

1.9. Developmental ecologies: values, beliefs and life experience

Deaf children's well-being is the result of the interaction between their capacities and the environment. As explored in the previous sections, while potential in the child is similar to other children, their nature as deaf individuals is different. In effect, parents and teachers at home and school failing to understand the deaf nature of the child, fall short in providing accessible environments and effective proximal processes. This situation has been seen to have serious consequences for the development of abilities and well-being.

Social stigma, lack of acceptance and accessibility to communication, misleading expectations and attributions at home and at school reflect the challenges of hearing environments in considering the deaf child from a different set of beliefs. Hearing aspirations for development are constantly challenged by deaf children's development.

Bronfenbrenner carried out an exhaustive study of "the nature and developmental contribution of the environment" to the individual (1989:188-189 in Moen, Elder and Lüscher, 1996) (see Section 1.3). Although, Bronfenbrenner did not explicitly contemplate in his works the possibility of a *dissonance* (i.e. hearing oriented life *vs.* visually oriented life) between the individual and the settings' way of perceiving life, he suggested that to study the ecology of the setting we need to examine the accommodation process of individual and environment.

The hearing adults surrounding the deaf children feel the child as divergent from the environment. Deaf children are visually in tune with their environment, however, the hearing adults surrounding the child experience *ecological dissonance*: the relationship held between the individual and its environment is challenged by an existing divergence between the way the environment orientates life and the way the individual lives its life. As a result, they make inferences about the deaf child's development and needs, which are not supported by the deaf child's own development. Their expectations are not met by the deaf child, and they attribute this to the child, taking for granted that the expectation is in accordance with the child's nature.

It is in the domain of language that one sees the first sign of the lack of ecology in deaf children's lives (Greenberg, 2000). For parents the ability to hear and speak is fundamental to their experience and regarded as necessary for the child's development (Reed, 1999). The lack of oral expression by the deaf child, as expected by hearing parents, is regarded as deviation from the "proper" developmental process (Marchesi, 1987b). This is, in most cases, regarded as a problem focused in the child (a problem in the process of spoken language acquisition) and not in the environment (a problem in enabling language development).

The lack of knowledge about the nature of deaf children makes it difficult for hearing parents to look beyond their own life experiences to understand the deaf child's needs. The acknowledgement of a world where language and life is visually experienced is not part of their lives and, therefore, is out of their hands. Deaf children, in the early stages of their development, have no need to produce oral expression, as it is not a part of their living experience. They are in need of a language to model and scaffold their experience (Garton, 1994), and to grasp their reality in visual terms, so that communication (i.e. language) becomes part of a social visual experience.

As they grow up, deaf children are introduced to different contexts (e.g. preschool, school and friends). Professionals, although aware of the visual experience of the deaf child, still are likely to experience this dissonance. The need of deaf pupils to establish a satisfactory relationship with teachers to fulfil academic potential, like any other hearing student, is not always met. Once again, the deaf child is seen as being less able to establish social relations (i.e. lack of social and emotional skills), as a result of not accommodating to the hearing

social ritual of school activities. The relationship that hearing teachers try to establish with the child is born of their hearing experience as students and teacher, although it might also come through sign language. Deaf children do not have problems in empathising with D/deaf adults and it is not difficult for them to learn a signed language. However, the lack of insight into the deaf pupil's ways of learning and establishing social relations creates an obstacle for the relation between teachers and students (Morales, 1999).

The most conclusive evidence of the hearing environments' "*dis-ecology*" is the fact that many deaf children, when adults, join the Deaf community and participate in Deaf culture (Marschark, 1993), where life is visually oriented in search of a common stand point from where to understand and construct life experiences and achieve self-fulfilment (Meadow-Orlans and Erting, 2000; Lane, Hoffmeister and Baham, 1996; Padden, 1989). In Lane's account of what it means to be a member of the Deaf community, one can see the different references between what the deaf child looks forward to as an adult and what they have been offered in their natural environment:

> To know what is a member of the deaf community is to imagine how you would think, feel, and react if you had grown up deaf, if a manual language had been your main means of communication, if your eyes were the portals of your mind, if most of your friends were deaf, if you had learned that there were children that couldn't sign only after you had seen dozens that could, if the people you admired were deaf, if you had struggled daily for as long as you can remember with the ignorance and uncommunicativeness of hearing people, if ...if, in a word, you were deaf (1993, p. 12)

The examples above give evidence of how the relationships between the individual and the immediate setting (i.e. microsystems: family, school) do not match. Deaf children first meet friends who experience life in a similar way and with whom they share similar ways of interaction in the school. The school experience for deaf people who stayed in residential school was rich and valuable because there they met other deaf children with whom they shared a common life story, despite the quality of the education received in some cases (Meadow-Orlans and Erting, 2000). Other deaf children, who do not have the opportunity to meet deaf peers during childhood, will get in touch with the Deaf community when they grow up as a process of self-awareness. The involvement in the Deaf community will try to compensate for the lack of social empathy in a completely mainstream society (Lane, 1993).

In consequence, deaf children's well-being is not so much determined by their deafness, but jeopardised by the dis-ecologies in which they have to develop. The lack of understanding and awareness of the child's deaf experience by the hearing adults who surround them often fails to provide children with the necessary cultural and social nurturing in accordance with their nature and way of experiencing life.

Fernández Mostaza (1999; 2003) has suggested that natural socialisation of deaf children in their natural culture and language can only take place if hearing parents of deaf children undergo a resocialisation. *Re*socialising in a new social and cultural group (i.e. Deaf culture and community) has clear implications for the parents. Fernandez Mostaza (1999; 2003) describes this process as a drastic break with the previous social experience. As part of this process, a new social world is built up whilst progressively the primary socialisation process of the hearing parents is brought down. In this sense, the primary socialisation process takes place for a second time. Emotional identification is established with the new group (i.e. members of the Deaf community become their significant others), while fighting with the old social and cultural background that had given meaning to their lives and identities (Fenández Mostaza, 1999; 2003).

Ecological dissonance would be potentially dissolved if hearing significant adults in the life of deaf children resocialised in Deaf culture. While parents have emotional ties with deaf children that might make them resocialised in Deaf culture, the case of socialisation at school might be slightly different.

1.10. Conclusion

In analysing the notion of well-being it becomes progressively clear that deaf children's potential experience of well-being is highly dependent on qualities within the environment-namely, in the livability of developmental environments as well as in the utility of a deaf person's life. Veenhoven's (2000) model allows us to clearly see how social processes external to the child constitute significant elements of deaf children's well-being. The meaning of deaf life and the way environments are adequate for experiencing well-being must be contemplated in our understanding of deaf children's well-being.

With this in mind, Bronfenbrenner's theory of bioecological development helps us see how the livability and utility of life are closely interrelated. Others' evaluation of a 'deaf life' (utility of life) set values and beliefs about deaf life and deaf children i.e. for hearing people a deaf person is a disabled person or for D/deaf people being deaf constitutes a way of being using sign language and cultural Deaf values. The livability of home and school ecologies reproduce these values and beliefs; when offering deaf children opportunities to communicate in sign language or when rehabilitation of speech and hearing is seen as the only way to communicate; when child's behaviour is interpreted from a pathologised or humanistic understanding of the child; when accepting deaf children's difference or being resigned to deficiency. The values and beliefs about a 'deaf life' (utility of life) impact on home and school ecologies (livability of the environment) in which deaf children are immersed - that is, the opportunities for fluent relationships within family, school and community.

These frameworks have allowed us to see not only how values and beliefs about deafness and deaf people play a fundamental part of home and school ecologies but also how they are crucial elements in understanding deaf pupils' well-being. In consequence, it can be suggested that the first step to promote deaf pupils' well-being in school is to consider how the notion of deaf pupils is being valued/understood, and the implications that this is having for the livability of school environments i.e. for deaf children's opportunities of developing and experiencing well-being.

Next chapter will consider school ecologies.

Chapter 2

Deaf education in Spain: Implications for school ecologies

2.1. Introduction

In Chapter 1 we argued that deaf children's well-being depends on their developmental ecologies. Findings from research carried out in D/deaf and hearing family environments suggest that parents' beliefs about their deaf children do not always lead to the creation of a healthy environment. Having discussed the impact of ecological dissonance on deaf children, it seems imperative to consider potential ecological dissonance in schools for the deaf in Spain.

2.2. Education in Spain

At the time the research project started the Spanish Education System was regulated by the LOGSE (1990). This law of education was a progressive attempt to improve education by putting the child and his/her needs at the core of the educational response.

This law was based on a *constructivist model* of Education (Coll, 1987). Children are given the leading role, by law, in the Spanish educational system. Their teachers are fundamental mediators between the educational contents (culture) and themselves (the individuals) (Coll, 1987; Marchesi and Martín, 1998; Coll et al., 2000).

The educational aims in the official curriculum need to be adapted to the culture of the pupils[1]. That is to say, aims must incorporate the cultural, social and gender diversity in the school. To achieve these goals, affective and relational aims are to be given as much importance as cognitive factors. Therefore, this makes the relationship between teachers and pupils decisive in the process of education (Coll, 1987; Marchesi and Martín, 1998; Coll et al., 2000).

[1] Because of the existing cultural diversity in Spain among other reasons, the 1990 law of education precisely designed an open and flexible curriculum capable of accommodating all the different cultures, but ensuring a common base for the whole country (Coll, 1987).

2.2.1. Constructivism in Spanish education

The importance of the pupils in constructing knowledge when learning is the core of the constructivist framework of education. The constructivist framework draws on theories of child development and learning, as well as on a critical analysis of teaching practice itself. The theoretical body that supports this framework pays special attention to the emotional and relational aspects involved in learning processes.

Within the constructivist framework, teaching and learning processes see the interaction between teacher, pupil and knowledge as the primary unit of analysis.

- The pupil

Learning is defined as a process by which pupils' initial knowledge is revisited, modified and re-organised, and new knowledge is progressively constructed (Coll, 1987). Cognitive and emotional conditions that are tightly intertwined within the pupil influence learning. The knowledge that pupils have on arrival at the school is the basis on which pupils construct new knowledge. However, it is the meaning that pupils attribute to learning processes that will make the experience a satisfying and significant one.

Meaning is seen as resulting from pupils' understanding/sharing the objectives of their learning experiences; pupils' self-confidence; and pupils' feelings of satisfaction and accomplishment. These conditions to learn (i.e. construct knowledge and meaning of learning) are closely related to pupils' implicit personality theories (Marchesi and Martin, 1998). In effect, the role of self-theories and their effects on motivation have been found to be significant in pupils' learning processes (Dweck, 1999). In effect, Dweck (1999) observed that children's beliefs of their own capacities as 'fixed' or 'incremental' influenced their performance as young as three years of age.

- The teacher

Teachers are, therefore, facilitators in pupils' construction and attribution of meaning. Teaching is understood, within this framework, as the assistance that teachers give pupils, which enables pupils to construct knowledge while discovering the meaning of learning as a process (Marchesi and Martín, 1998).

To support pupils' learning, teachers constantly adjust to the difficulties and progress of pupils. Shared meaning is vital to the construction of knowledge. A common language that enables interaction between teachers and pupils is a key element in the processes of teaching and learning. Language is a fundamental element in teachers' and pupils' interaction; however, access to pupils' mental representations is also essential. It is by sharing pupils' mental representations that teachers can find ways to adjust their teaching to the mental construction that pupils are using. While at the start teachers will need to use greater structuring and intervention, pupils become more independent in their learning (i.e. 'transfer of control'). However, for this to happen adequate learning environments/situations need still to be created by the teacher (Marchesi and Martín, 1998).

Teachers' representation of pupils will influence the teaching process and pupils' self-expectations and achievement. Similarly, teachers' own expectations and feelings of competence are also important. The relationship between teachers and pupils is essential to teaching practice, and will constitute a central element of school ecologies. This will be more extensively explored in following sections.

- The contents of the curriculum

The constructivist framework includes the social and cultural relevance of the contents, and the logical and psychological significance of contents (Coll, 1987).

Contents presented to the pupils in the classroom must be relevant to their experiences as individuals or as members of social and cultural groups. Relevance is understood in terms of the functionality that the contents have for the pupil- that is, the potential to relate daily experiences to the contents and the potential to apply the learned contents to construct further knowledge as an independent learner.

Contents that refer to the life experiences of the pupils, not only increase pupils' interest in and motivation towards their learning, but also create an organisation in pupils' minds that will allow them to use them, within the context of their life and not just in the classroom.

> Within the Spanish constructivist model contents need to have internal coherence (logic significance) when established by teachers as well as relevance to the pupils' life experience i.e. previous knowledge (psychological significance). This is seen as crucial for pupils to incorporate new knowledge (Coll, 1987).

To summarise, there are three fundamental elements in the Spanish constructivist model: the pupil; the teacher; and the contents of the curriculum. Teaching practice integrates these three elements and the interaction of these elements with one another, as described above.

2.3. Deaf education in Spain

In the late 1970s and during the 1980s a change in the education of deaf children took place in Spain (Marchesi, 1987a). On the one hand, the weaknesses of oral education were apparent and on the other, awareness about research on sign language and its potential use in the education of deaf children was increased (Marchesi, 1987a). Sign language had a place in Deaf education (Marchesi, 1987a).

At the same time, because of mainstreaming, many schools for the deaf were closed and more deaf pupils were mainstreamed (LISMI, 1982). Mainstreaming policy put into place favoured oralist approaches. Aware of the detriment that oralism could bring to some deaf pupils, the Ministry of Education proposed special measures regarding deaf children's mainstreaming, such as use of sign language, provision of sign language interpreters in the classroom and contact with deaf peers (Marchesi, 1987a). Most deaf children were mainstreamed in ordinary schools. Some deaf pupils were the only deaf children in the classroom, while still meeting other deaf peers in the playground. However, other deaf children were the only deaf children in the school. Although deaf children might be in a hearing school with other deaf children they were expected to follow the teaching in speech with their hearing peers.

2.3.1. Deaf pupils within the Spanish education system

Within the Spanish education system deaf pupils are seen as special needs pupils with a disability (Marchesi and Martín,. 1998). In consequence the school curriculum has to be adapted for deaf pupils' special needs. In some cases, adaptations might contemplate special services (e.g. speech therapy and teacher assistants), in other cases the introduction of alternative ways of communication might be considered (e.g. signed Spanish; sign language). Decisions about adaptations to meet deaf pupils' needs are taken by school boards on the basis of

their understanding of deaf pupils and their educational project. However, in any case, school boards' curricular adaptations for deaf pupils need to ascribe to two principles established by law:

- The curriculum has undergone the necessary changes to be relevant to the child's experience (i.e. contents have logical and psychological relevance) (see Section 2.2)

- The curriculum is delivered in a way that is accessible for the child so that he/she can actively engage in their learning.

Sign language is often considered to be an instrument to give deaf pupils access to the curriculum. However, Deaf culture is not seen to be a significant element of this process. As a result, sign language is understood in a rather instrumental way, instead of a cultural component connected with the life experience of deaf pupils. In turn, it can be removed from the deaf child when considered appropriate by teachers.

For instance, while at the beginning of the school experience deaf children might be encouraged to sign to participate in the school activities (accessibility to the curriculum), this measure can be reconsidered when teachers feel children should cope audio/orally with their hearing aids, lip-reading or cochlear implants. Using sign language as a gateway to the curriculum without incorporating Deaf culture to achieve psychological relevance of the curriculum for deaf pupils is likely to have a negative impact on school ecologies (i.e. deaf pupils' learning experience)

2.3.2. Education provision for deaf pupils

Two elements defined education provision for deaf pupils, as presented in Section 1.5.2: Placement and Communication

- Placement (Alonso et al., 2004).

Education provision for deaf pupils in Spain contemplates four alternatives: *Mainstreaming in ordinary schools:* in which usually there are one or two deaf pupils per 25 hearing pupils; *Mainstreaming in ordinary schools:* but receiving education in a classroom with other deaf peers; *Combined schooling*: offering a deaf peer group, while being in a classroom of hearing children. There are two teachers per classroom; one uses sign language to make the curriculum accessible

for the deaf child. Other resources such as Deaf assistants are put into place to support deaf pupils. *Special schools for deaf children*: where there are only deaf children and deaf children with disabilities.

- Communication

Bilingualism offers status to sign language and spoken language in the education of deaf pupils (Andrews, Leigh and Weiner, 2004). *Monolingualism* offers access to the curriculum through the use of his/her residual hearing and lip-reading skills (Marchesi, 1987b).

2.3.3. Summary

Within this framework, the Spanish educational system places the deaf child as disabled and deviant (Marchesi and Martín, 1998). While this understanding of deaf pupils does not offer a view of difference or alternative culture, elements of Deaf culture (e.g. sign language) are used in isolation.

2.4. Exploring bilingual-bicultural education for deaf pupils within a constructivist framework

Bilingual-bicultural philosophy in Deaf education advocates a Deaf cultural identity for deaf pupils. Within a bilingual-bicultural philosophy deaf pupils are seen as cultural minority pupils. Their natural language is that of the Deaf community- sign language. Sign language and other elements of Deaf culture will be presented by Deaf role models, who are not always members of deaf pupils' families (see Section 1.5.1). Deaf pupils will grow up to develop a Deaf identity – something foreseen in the Spanish approach to cultural diversity.

2.4.1. Constructivism and pupils of minority cultures

The law of education (LOGSE, 1990) recognised the cultural diversity existent within the Spanish State. In turn, an official curriculum establishing minimum curricular contents common to the education of all pupils throughout Spain, while still remaining open and flexible to allow minority cultural groups to concretise their basic curricular designs (through their local governments) was the way around cultural diversity, within the education system. In addition to this, the constructivist ideology underpinning the education system obliged not only local authorities but also schools to reflect on the culture of their pupils. Pupils' culture was regarded in the LOGSE as a fundamental element in making education a meaningful experience for pupils e.g. if teaching had to take into account what

pupils knew when starting school, pupils' cultural and social experiences needed to be contemplated in the school curriculum.

The relationship that pupils establish with their teachers and with the contents of the curriculum cannot be understood in a social and cultural vacuum. The way in which the child understands life and faces learning processes is influenced by the ongoing interaction of the deaf child with his/her family and with other members of his/her cultural group.

In turn, deaf children from D/deaf family backgrounds and with a clear cultural experience in the Deaf community will face school and learning processes with presumptions about communication and relationships in school. To fulfil these aspirations, the school would need to change to match expectations (Marchesi and Martín, 1998).

In the case of deaf children from hearing parents the situation differs slightly. Hearing families might not be in contact with Deaf culture or the Deaf community before they arrive at school. For many deaf children and their hearing families, a group of deaf peers is accessible for the first time in school (see section 1.5.3). While for the deaf child, the connection with other deaf peers is often described as immediate (Corker, 1996), for hearing parents its engagement will happen over a period of time (Erting, 1994). However, despite parental acceptance (or not) of Deaf culture, often deaf children born in hearing families (up to 90%) grow up to become members of the Deaf community (Lane, 1993). In turn, there is evidence to suggest that Deaf culture is the one that best meets the needs of this children- presenting their deafness as a meaningful cultural experience.

In contrast to what parents might expect, providing quality education for pupils from different cultures forces schools and teachers to rethink the curriculum within the cultural framework to which the child belongs, if learning processes are to be significant to the child's experience (Marchesi and Martín, 1998) (see Section 2.2.1).

Marchesi and Martín (1998) highlight the culture of the pupil:

> A valid school curriculum should take into account (1) pupils' cultural knowledge as well as (2) awareness of pupils' culture... The first aspect considers making learning a meaningful experience for pupils by considering pupils' knowledge about the world, their language, their family experience, their peer group experiences, their cultural rules, and the way in which pupils approach learning. The second aspect regards the incorporation of the history, the language and the customs of the pupils' reference group (Marchesi and Martín[2], 1998, p. 244)

In turn, understanding the culture of deaf pupils is not simply a theoretical input of Deaf culture to be incorporated in the curriculum as Deaf studies subjects (Stone, 2000). It needs to be made operational in the practice of the curriculum by incorporating not only language but also the values and beliefs through which pupils of a particular cultural background relate to the world (if we are to avoid ecological dissonance).

In talking about the necessary reorganisation of the school as a system, Marchesi and Martín (1998) highlight the values and norms that guide life in school. They point out that these norms and values work in subtle and implicit ways in the relation of staff, pupils and organisation – that is, the hidden curriculum. The messages conveyed to the pupils in these daily practices need to be examined and reconsidered. Barriers and obstacles to minority culture pupils can be set up by values and norms that drive educational practice and daily life events in school which in turn affects pupils' self-perception and construction of their cultural identity, well-being and achievement at school (Marchesi and Martín, 1998).

The way communication and social relationships are established in school is clearly challenging for hearing professionals in charge of deaf pupils' education. The psychological implications of deaf pupils' limited incidental learning at (mainstream or oral) schools and their stress and frustration resulting from hearing-led school environments are well documented (Greenberg, 2000). In addition to this, Ladd (2003) documents the oppressive consequences that hearing values and norms have when imposed on deaf pupils through their education. In effect, fear, submission, pathologised sense of self (e.g. as less able to learn or disabled), enforced impotence, fatalism and impassiveness of the culture of the deaf child in his/her life (Deaf culture) are some of the negative consequences reported by deaf people who were educated in the past (Ladd, 1998; Ladd, 2003).

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[2] Translation mine.

This negative ecology is largely controlled by teachers' attitudes. In Marchesi's and Martín's (1998) view, attitudes towards the minority community pupil impinge in all areas of school and teaching practice. The low expectations of teachers affect deaf pupils' learning and well-being (Hindley, 2000).

Within the Spanish constructivist framework, there are clear benefits for deaf pupils and their education of the incorporation of Deaf culture in the curriculum. On the one hand, the use of Deaf culture would bridge the gap between hearing teachers' and pupils' experience, giving learning a meaning; on the other, incorporating Deaf cultural heritage would help children make sense of their culture/experience as deaf individuals.

2.4.2. Cultural empathy and cultural clashes

Cultural conflict between hearing educators and D/deaf parents has been documented (Erting, 1985). Erting (1985) points out that D/deaf people's visual experience structures their lives differently.

> Attempts to meet hearing world standards cause stress, but refusal to do so threatens survival (Erting, 1985, p. 227)

This situation can elicit a helpless sense of dependence on hearing people – the dominant majority in and out of school (Erting, 1985).

Policies and resources are allocated in school to make a deaf child into a 'normal' child - that is from a hearing perspective, a child that hears and speaks (Erting, 1985). School programmes are often built around communication methods that have implicit definitions of what 'being deaf' means. These are presented in terms of methodologies or philosophies that must guide teachers' practice with deaf pupils (Erting, 1985) – but which create the dissonance, which has been described above.

Hearing teachers who have representations of deaf pupils as disabled or impaired are likely to have a different understanding of the use of hearing aids or speech from deaf adults themselves. Erting (1985) in a study of cultural conflict between D/deaf parents and hearing educators described several ways in which D/deaf parents and hearing educators understood life in different ways. Failure to resolve

conflict led to increasing alienation between D/deaf parents and hearing teachers and strong feelings of frustrations. The same is likely to apply to the pupils.

Deninger (1983) examined the quality of interaction and relationships among hearing and Deaf people at school. The different culturally Deaf and hearing belief systems and cultural orientations created diverging views towards the use of sign language in instruction, the use of amplification devices, and the development of speech in pupils.

Understanding of these topics in which Deaf and hearing professionals held different views was seen as a way of strengthening the programme and services for deaf pupils improving the effectiveness of the entire school. Cultural conflict was seen to be a problem that affected the whole organisation. In other words, an unstable ecology develops.

The objective of Deninger's intervention was to raise the awareness of the differences, which grew out of different and separate cultural orientations of deaf and hearing teachers rather than to change attitudes among professionals.

There were certain areas of Deaf - hearing relationships that seemed to be especially thorny: communication sensitivity; intercultural awareness; and mutual respect.

Neither hearing nor Deaf professionals had awareness of what their hearing and visual experience of life meant, and the implications for the way that structured social relationships (Deninger, 1983).

A three-stage transition was proposed for the transition from cultural conflict to cultural empathy:

1. Resentment or guilt
2. Anger at the opposition culture
3. Understanding of the opposing culture and acceptance: at this level communication is possible with equal feeling of security and freedom.

In reviewing cultural clashes among other minority communities, evidence was found that differences in the way teachers and pupils experience life had an

impact on how life and teaching was organised at school and had the potential to put pupils at disadvantage. Analysing the case of Samoan pupils in an Australian school, Singh (2001) identified several cultural conflicts that prevented Australian teachers from understanding Samoan pupils and interpreting their behaviour correctly. For instance, Singh (2001) found out that Samoan paraprofessionals attributed educational disadvantage to the arbitrary organisation of pupils, knowledge and spaces in schools, and to significant differences between schools and Samoan institutions. However, according to members of the Samoan community, teachers often failed to see these factors and attributed young Samoans' poorer performance to diminished ability (when compared with other pupils at school).

In Samoans' eyes, values and beliefs that constituted the Samoan way of being and culture guided how young Samoans behaved at school, regulated their relationships with teachers, influenced their relationship with knowledge and the way they expressed themselves in school (Singh, 2001; Singh and Dooley, 2001). This Samoan way, clearly, clashed with values and life organisation in the wider Australian community. Teachers coming from the majority community did not understand their Samoan pupils, often misinterpreting their behaviour and finally, putting Samoan pupils at a disadvantage (Singh, 2001; Singh and Dooley, 2001). Some factors contributing to this situation could be identified:

> For example, Fofofa Safotu spoke about the 'misunderstandings' teachers developed about Samoan students as a result of inadequate research training, rushed endeavours to garner information about the new clientele of students, and lack of preparation time to construct lessons in which students could recognise themselves [...] (Singh, 2001, p. 332)

In addition to this, school-parents relationships were also seen as a contributing factor (Singh, 2001).

Some of the implications of teachers' lack of awareness of Samoan culture were linked to Samoans' achievement. The way knowledge was organised and selected was clearly deficient in representing the Samoan pupil's interest and cultural identity. Furthermore, practice in the classroom was seen to have an impact on young Samoan's identity development (Singh and Dooley, 2001):

> [...] the individualised identity achieved through the communicative practises of schooling and the Samoan identity achieved through acquiring the values of respect and obedience/servitude by taking the

> perspective of higher ranked person in the *fa'aSamoan*[3] [...] difference in social relations between these communicative contexts can cause confusion for students. (Singh and Dooley, 2001, p. 354).

From these studies (Singh, 2001; Singh and Dooley, 2001), clear evidence was gathered that the "instructional discourse" and the "regulative discourse" in Australian schools in which Samoan pupils had to learn contained a clear model of the learner, the teachers and teachers-students relationship that responded to the majorities' beliefs. These discourses played a crucial ideological function in relation to power and control in the classroom and school.

Discourses in the classroom were significantly different from those beliefs and values that regulated Samoan relationships and interaction (Singh, 2001; Singh and Dooley, 2001). For example, while in Australian schools pupils' participation was encouraged, in Samoan culture children were encultured to be respectful by adopting a submissive attitude that restricted interaction with adults.

Under these circumstances, relationships within the classroom/school followed a set of beliefs and values that was not natural to Samoans' native culture and therefore did not connect with Samoan pupils' experiences of communication with adults. Similarly, pupils' quiet behaviour misled teachers who interpreted Samoan lack of participation as lack of ability or motivation.

This situation clearly illustrates how dissonance in the ecology of environments can affect pupils' and teachers' performance in school. While there are still no studies to illustrate ecological dissonance between deaf children and their hearing teachers, these studies with Samoan pupils and their teachers highlight the risks of assuming a generalised life experience common to teachers and pupils.

2.5. Understanding interpersonal relationships in school

In exploring teachers' and pupils' interpersonal relationships three elements need to be considered:

- Social representations and personal constructions
- Interaction between teachers and pupils
- Communication between teachers and pupils

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[3] *Fa'aSamoan* according to (Singh, 2001; Singh and Dooley, 2001) means Samoan way.

2.5.1. Social representations and personal constructions

Teachers' and pupils' perceptions of each other start before they reach the classroom (Morales, 1999; Woods, 1983). Knowledge and representations of pupils is accumulated through their life experiences. In addition, during teachers' professional training and early induction, representations of pupils are provided to them in the form of social and cultural narratives about achievement, ability, and behaviour by other teachers.

Social representations i.e. the representations, stereotypes and concepts commonly offered as a consensus in that individual's social world (Moscovici, 1984; DiMaggio, 1997; Bauer and Gaskell, 1999; Moscovici and Duveen, 2000) establish a model of *pupil.* In addition to this, social representations are thereby influenced by structural and traditional forces, which prescribe what needs to be considered when thinking and talking about the notion of *pupil.* In reviewing work by Esland and Hammersley, Wood (1983) claims that teachers understand their work by drawing on different pre-established 'paradigms', which they consider 'ideal types'. However, teachers' perspectives included complex representations that combined views from different paradigms in varying strengths. These personal constructions may vary over time and space (Woods, 1983; Morales, 1999) and may influence teachers' perceptions of pupils as well as teachers' own definition of their roles and expectations as teachers and pupils (Hargreaves, 1972; Woods, 1983; Morales, 1999; Schmidt, 2000).

In addition to the social representation of pupils alive in the cultural, social and professional arena in which teachers are immersed, teachers still need to elaborate their own visual representations of pupils (Hargreaves, 1972; Wagner, 1999). These constructions of the pupils may share similarities with those of social or/and professional groups. However, as Kelly (1955; 1991) explains, these interpretations of events result in individuals' constructions of the world (Construction corollary) through their own 'personal' construct systems (Individuality corollary) (Burr and Butt, 2000; Riegler, 2001; Burr, 2003). These abstractions elaborated by teachers to make sense of their reality at school are defined by Kelly (1955; 1991) as templates used in a particular context, by a particular person who has created it autonomously through an observed replication of themes in reality (Burr and Butt, 2000; Riegler, 2001; Burr, 2003).

The relevance of teachers' personal construction of school reality can be well illustrated by the study of rhetoric discourses at schools. Sharp and Green (1972 in Woods, 1983) in their study of a primary school contemplated how despite teachers' declared educational progressivism, practice in the classroom followed traditional methods. Different explanations may be found for these phenomena; however a link to the integration of a social representation of education within a personal framework of understanding is one way of approaching it. As Sharp and Green's (1972) research concluded, social representations of progressive schools and education had been brought into the school, yet teachers had not been given an opportunity to *construct* teaching practice in a 'progressive' way. Teachers could not interpret education progressively as their lens was still strongly influenced by traditional methods of teaching used previously in the school.

From this perspective, Sharps and Green's (1972) claim for clear indications and proper guidance for teachers to implement progressive educational practices, can be interpreted not just as a mechanism to support teachers' practice, but most importantly as an opportunity for teachers to construct a new lens through which to understand education as a whole in 'progressive' terms. Consequently, in the absence of a personal construct system[4] that allowed progressive interpretations of education, Sharp and Green (1972) noted that teachers rhetorically used progressive jargon to explain and describe children, education and their practice, but could not interpret teaching practice and relationships with pupils through that lens. Similarly, Jones (1999) in a qualitative study of headteachers in Primary education concluded that the key to an effective transition from a traditional to a more progressive model of school management, was the development of new attitudes and values with which to understand the headteachers' role.

So, there is a relationship between teachers' social relationships and their personal constructions that it is important in understanding the way they perceive their experiences at school.

Kelly (1955; 1991) in his theory of personal constructs described the relationship, formation and change of personal constructs. From a Kellyian perspective teachers' constructs provide them with information that allows understanding and

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[4] Wood (1983) points out that Sharp's and Green's (1972) work was criticised by Hammersley (1977) and Hargreaves (1978) for not exploring teachers' construction in sufficient depth.

anticipation in a given situation. In this sense, personal constructs (Kelly, 1955; 1991; Burr and Butt, 2000; Riegler, 2001; Burr, 2003) and social representations (Moscovici and Duveen, 2000; Bauer and Gaskell, 1999; DiMaggio, 1997; Moscovici, 1984) share a fundamental similarity, as both regard understanding of reality as a result of thinking through simplified replications of events and objects in the world. It seems hence that the major difference between both theories is an individual *vs.* social perspective on representations.

However, as Fransella (1984) points out, Kelly's theory of personal construct not only addresses the personal component of constructs, but also suggests a way of understanding the emergence of shared representation of reality (DiMaggio, 1997). Teachers' common representations may be understood as the result of a common or similar way of interpreting reality (i.e. similar construct systems) through which to look at pupils, education and themselves, while for Kelly (1955; 1991) it was not a similar experience that led to common representation but the existence of a similar interpretative system. However, similar construct systems can be seen as the result of determining social forces impacting on the individual's elaboration of his/her personal construct system (Burr and Butt, 2000; Riegler, 2001; Burr, 2003).

At this point, the study of social and personal representations seems to lead to the traditional disputes between psychologist and sociologist about what comes first the society or the individual (a chicken-egg situation). Without trying to respond to this chicken-egg situation, it has to be noted that both theorists acknowledged the influence of the individual and the social in the formation of social representation and personal constructions (Fransella, 1984; DiMaggio, 1997). In consequence, social representations can be seen as the outcome of similar construct systems employed to understand phenomena, as well as the result of the influence that the prescriptive and conventional nature of social representations exert in the definition of personal construct systems.

Acknowledging the influence that social representations may have on the definition of teachers' personal construct systems, it is indisputable that teachers' personal constructs will guide teachers in their interpersonal relationships with pupils. Learning is often mediated by teachers scaffolding of pupils' development. In this respect, teachers and pupils need to engage in an

interpersonal relationship and communication is essential. For Kelly (1955; 1991) interaction implied achieving meaningful insight into another person's construct system (Burr and Butt, 2000; Riegler, 2001; Burr, 2003). In this regard, teachers need to be able to construe pupils' construct systems, to understand them and support their learning processes. Otherwise, as Kelly suggests, teachers and pupils may do things to each other but will not relate nor truly communicate with each other. This empathic definition of "interaction" is described too by Fransella (1984, p. 160) as "standing in each others shoes and seeing things as the other sees them". Teacher interactions with pupils will be mediated by their personal construct systems, which in turn are the subject and object of social representations (DiMaggio, 1997).

Construct systems are organised in a hierarchical structure, making manageable the wide range of constructs that people hold (Kelly, 1955; 1991; Burr and Butt, 2000; Riegler, 2001; Burr, 2003). In order to avoid confusion in interpreting events, people will look for congruency and consistency amid the construct system. However, systems may hold constructs that are inconsistent without provoking any dissonance to the person. Some constructs are more permeable than others and this depends very much on the person. Permeable constructs allow people to make sense out of the new events they have faced by manipulating the construct. On the other hand, impermeable constructs force new events into the existing system however well they fit (Modulation corollary) (Kelly, 1955; 1991; Burr and Butt, 2000; Riegler, 2001; Burr, 2003). Constructs are elaborated through two processes (Kelly, 1955; 1991; Burr and Butt, 2000; Riegler, 2001; Burr, 2003):

- Definition: confirming in ever greater detail aspects of experience which have already been actively construed.
- Extension: reaching out to increase the range of a construct system by exploring new areas.

Both social representations and teachers' construct systems constitute essential elements of school ecologies. Teachers' and pupils' roles and interaction are constructed through values and beliefs incorporated in teachers' construct systems, which as seen in this section are influenced by social representations. Values and beliefs underpinning social representations and teachers' construct systems constitute the core element of school ecologies, which guide

relationships as well as teaching and learning processes in the classroom i.e. proximal process (see Chapter 1).

To summarise, teachers' constructs are influenced by social representations in their personal and professional social groups. While social representation prescribes a way of thinking about, for example, pupils, teachers' individual representations of the pupils are based on their own understanding of the notion of *pupil*. Social representations influence the way we think about pupils (social values and beliefs), however teachers' elaboration of constructs is an individual process that incorporates a personal experience, values and beliefs. In turn, school ecologies rely on the interaction of both collective (social representations) and individual (construct systems) values and beliefs.

2.5.2. Interactions between teachers and pupils

Schools are complex social systems, structured by the roles that teachers and pupils play in the system. As Hargreaves (1972; Wagner, 1999; Schmidt, 2000) explains, the roles of teachers and pupils are defined by 'role-partners'. Role-partners place expectations upon teachers and pupils, based on a reciprocal relationship where the duties of the role holder are the rights of its role partner.

Teachers' roles are likely to be similarly defined by parents, head teachers, colleagues and pupils. Often teachers cannot fulfil entirely the expectations from their different role partners (i.e. pupils, colleagues, head-teachers and parents) creating 'role conflicts' or 'strains' (Hargreaves, 1972; Schmidt, 2000). Conflicts are likely to emerge when roles are defined from different value systems. This was clearly illustrated in the study of Samoan pupils in Australian schools (see Section 2.4.2). Role strain can be reduced by minimising the inconsistencies attached one's role. Hargreaves (1972) observed teachers displayed such mechanisms to enable coping.

Teachers' and pupils' behave as expected by their different roles partners (i.e. teachers, pupils, parents, head teacher and so on) (Hargreaves, 1972). Teachers approach pupils with social representations and constructs that influence and guide teachers' attitudes and behaviours towards pupils. Attitudes towards pupils (that incorporate their social and cultural as well as personal experience) enable adaptation to the child (Tajfel and Fraser, 1978; DiMaggio, 1997). In spite of the

existing critiques (Jaspars and Fraser, 1984), the idea of 'attitude' is still a useful one to illustrate how teachers guide themselves in their interaction with pupils by using a personal representation of the child which informs them of their feelings, beliefs and behavioural dispositions (rooted in wider collective and social representations) (Fishbein and Azjen, 1972). Pupils' performance is therefore defined by the teachers' expectations (Hargreaves, 1972; Wagner, 1999). However, these processes assume that both teachers and pupils share a common experience and mutual communication. In the case of deaf pupils these assumptions are challenged.

Successful interactions take place when two people correctly perceive the expectations of the other. As it has been explained, perceptions of each other are mediated by social representations, attitudes, and roles expectations (Smith and Mackie, 2000). When teachers and pupils meet, they are bound to form an impression of each other. Teachers will form impressions of pupils by interpreting pupils' characteristics, traits and behaviours as teachers 'perceive' them. Teachers anticipate information about their pupils by drawing on personal constructs and attitudes previously elaborated through their social and cultural experiences. However, teachers will select information to create an idea about pupils. Ages and gender are common salient characteristics in the pupils and are often perceived by teachers immediately (Woods, 1983). In addition to this, teachers are also expected to perceive information related to teachers' goals, roles and interests (Hargreaves, 1972).

Hargreaves (1972) suggests that this new constructed perception of pupils crystallises in a visual representation of pupils. The use of stereotypical constructions of pupils is explained as an enabling mechanism to deal with school reality favoured by the ways role structures relationships (Wood, 1983; Hargreaves, Hester and Mellor, 1975; Hargreaves, 1972; Wagner, 1999; Schmidt, 2000). As the relationship between teachers and pupils develops, teachers are likely to create more accurate constructions of pupils that may alter initial impressions. Teachers' ability to process information thoroughly and their motivation in reconsidering initial impressions can promote changes of perceptions. Teachers' constructions are most likely to relate to projected successes in regard to their own teaching i.e. they use perceptions of progress to justify their own approach and thereby to construct their stereotype of the pupil.

This aspect is particularly powerful when the teacher and pupil do not share a language.

Altering perceptions requires cognitive effort and time but creates for teachers a more accurate perception of pupils (Smith and Mackie, 2000). In reaching deeper understandings of pupils, teachers are likely to elaborate attributions about pupils' behaviours and its possible causes (Hargreaves, 1972; Wagner, 1999). In this sense, given a similar situation teachers can anticipate similar behaviour in pupils.

Attributional theory was first presented by Heider (1958) who proposed that people make attempts to formulate theories or explanations about the causes for other people's actions. The way people form these explanations is by contemplating causes:

- Internal or dispositional causes: referred to people's needs, wills, intentions and personalities.
- External/situation causes: linked to environmental causes, circumstances or situations in which an action is performed.

A further formulation of attributional theory was elaborated by Weiner (1986; Feshbach, Weiner and Bohart, 1996). In this Theory of Causal attribution three parameters are identified:

- Locus of causality- that refers to the location of the cause. The cause can be perceived as internal or external to the individual (internal/external)
- Stability- that refers to the possibilities to alter the cause- that is, if the cause is one that can be altered with time or intervention or if it is permanent (stable/unstable)
- Controllability- that indicates if the cause can be controlled or not by the individual – that is, if the individual can act upon the cause to control or limits the consequences (controllable/uncontrollable)

This formulation presented a more accurate model to interpret causal relationships (Pervin, 2001; Feshbach, Weiner and Bohart, 1996).

Since such links are socially and culturally constructed, there is high potential to find different associations and to fall into misleading cultural bias (Smith and Mackie, 2000). Yet, Hargreaves (1972) warns that one of the most common sources of misunderstandings in human relationships is the attribution to others of motives and intentions which are incorrect (Smith and Mackie, 2000).

Relationships between teachers and pupils are not an exception (Pollard and Pann, 1993).

Despite its risks, engaging in attributional thinking based on pupils' traits as well as characteristics, may lead to the revision of teachers' initial inferences about pupils and bring certain accuracy and complexity to teachers' understanding of pupils. This is known as *Implicit Personality Theory* (Schneider, 1973). In inferring information about pupils, teachers are likely to draw on cultural patterns of implicit personality theory. Through the attribution of personality traits teachers may perceive pupils' behaviour as more predictable and consistent. A comprehensive picture of pupils is being formed. With it, teachers will tend to develop further expectations in regard to pupils' actions and behaviour. This attributional process can structure and facilitate future interaction between teachers and pupils (Hargreaves, 1972; Pollard and Pann, 1993; Morales, 1999). In the light of new information contradictory to the impression formed, consistency of teachers' representations is threatened, which increases the likelihood of resistance. However in dealing with this stereotypical way of perceiving pupils, Hargreaves (1972) recommends keeping an open mind on change. In turn, incongruent information may also raise awareness of teachers' misperceptions about pupils and trigger a change of perception (Hargreaves, 1972; Pollard and Pann, 1993).

Attributions, as seen in this section, play a fundamental role in the adaptation (i.e. proximal processes) between teachers and pupils. Attributions constitute an essential role in school ecologies as they offer interpretations of pupils within teachers' values and belief systems which may potentially be misrepresenting pupils' experience.

2.5.3. Communication between teachers and pupils

As Hargreaves (1972) reminds us, perception is an interpersonal process (Smith and Mackie, 2000). While teachers are perceiving and forming impressions about pupils, pupils are receiving information about themselves through their interpretations of teachers' behaviours (Morales, 1999; Wagner, 1999). This dialectical process between teachers and pupils contributes to children's development of self, as they will incorporate information about themselves that teachers project to them whilst interacting (see Section 1.6). This phenomenon

has been vastly analysed by 'self-fulfilling prophecies' (Rosenthal and Jacobson, 1968; 2003), 'labelling theorists' and 'typing theorists' (Hargreaves, Hester and Mellor, 1975) in the analysis of classroom interactions (Hargreaves, Hester and Mellor, 1975), again all based on a presumption of shared communication.

Self-fulfilling prophecies explored by Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968; 2003) explained how the expectations that teachers held about pupils (based on teachers' perceptions) impacted on how pupils saw themselves and in turn, led pupils to fulfil teachers' expectations. Teachers' attitudes towards pupils were seen at the time as individual cognitive representations and dispositions towards pupils. Teachers became the focal element in understanding self fulfilling-prophecies.

Individualistic interpretations of 'attitudes' overshadowed the social dimension of self-fulfilling prophecies. Attitudes, seen as collective and social in their nature (Thomas and Znaniecki, 1918 and in Jaspars and Fraser, 1984; Potter, 2002), indicated that self-fulfilling prophecies could be also affected by collective representations of pupils by teachers. In this respect, Hammersley (1984) found that teachers' typifications of pupils likely to impact on pupils' performance and self-representations, were seen to be a significant part of staff-room culture. In turn, there is reason to suggest that self-fulfilling prophecies have a social as well as personal origin. In consequence, in considering teachers' and pupils' communication, social representations/typifications of pupils as well as teachers' individual attitudes need to be explored. One clear example is the expectation of 'clever pupils' to perform well. While self-fulfilling prophecies may have some effects over pupils' performance, prophecies cannot be seen as totally responsible for it.

Labelling theory portrays a similar process as the self-fulfilling prophecy theory. In this respect, the expectations are triggered when the pupil behaves in a way that challenges teachers' social and personal expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils' behaviour is hence labelled as deviant. As a result of the labelling processes, teachers tend to expect behaviour in agreement with the label (Smith and Mackie, 2000). Pupils will tend to conform to the label, fulfilling teachers' expectations. The social and cultural influence impinging on teachers' labelling processes can be clearly appreciated in the fact that an act in itself is not deviant.

> An act can only become deviant when it deviates from a cultural and social meanings attached to the act and to the behavioural expectations posed by an environment in particular situations (Hargreaves, Hester and Mellor, 1975; Wagner, 1999).

Fundamental elements in teachers' and pupils' interpersonal relationship have been explored. The role of social representations and constructions of pupils and the effects of perceptions, roles and attitudes affecting interaction and communication are seen as essential to the mutual adaptation of teachers and pupils (i.e. proximal processes). Values and beliefs significantly affect teachers-pupils relationship (i.e. school ecologies and proximal processes).

2.6. Conclusion

As discussed in this chapter, there are several elements that impinge in school ecologies. Within a constructivist framework, the Spanish education system provides deaf pupils and their culture as deaf individuals with the lead in constructing a school ecology: on the one hand, the child-centred approach on which the constructivist model is based establishes that education should meet pupils' individual needs; on the other hand, to make education a meaningful experience for pupils and promote significant learning education needs to consider pupils' personal, social and cultural experience and introduce elements such as their language and other cultural elements into the curriculum.

However, within the law of education (LOGSE, 1990) deaf pupils are still regarded as disabled individuals. While elements of Deaf culture (e.g. sign language) have been introduced in some schools, an alternative cultural approach is not contemplated. This situation as has been considered in this chapter creates circumstances in which cultural clashes are likely to take place. In considering cultural conflicts, generated by difference in teachers' and pupils' experiences, beliefs and values are likely to emerge within the educational relationship. Teachers' beliefs about pupils and their attitudes towards them seem to play a significant part in the education relationship and school ecologies.

No literature on teachers' beliefs systems about deaf pupils has been identified in a review of the main literature on Deaf education. In what follows, a study of teachers' beliefs about deaf pupils will be carried out, as there is enough evidence to support the idea that understanding of school ecologies can contribute to better opportunities for deaf pupils' development and well-being.

Chapter 3

Methodology

3.1. Introduction

Chapters 1 and 2 tell us that the way in which we think about deaf pupils impacts on the way we construct school ecologies, which in turn, promote or limit deaf pupils' well-being. The issue is how to construct that ecology and how to engage the teacher with its development – this is to be the subject of the research.

3.2. Epistemological and ontological considerations

Empirical and positivist stances assume that the nature of the world can be revealed by observation. Alternative epistemological positions propose that what is known as 'real' can be understood as a constructed reality, in which representations of social life and the meaning that these phenomena have is constructed by individuals (Bryman, 2001). Social constructionism challenges the idea of a single fixed reality and proposes that the social world is constantly being defined and transformed as a result of social influences (Bryman, 2001).

Social constructionism takes a critical stance towards assumed conventional knowledge about the world, often presented as grounded in 'unbiased observations'. In response to this 'unproblematic' presentation of 'reality' and 'truth' as single, fixed and objective products of nature, social constructionism critically analyses how the world appears to be, constantly questioning the ways in which the world is understood. Within this framework, social phenomena and their meanings are creations of social actors and the nature of social world is constantly being defined and transformed as a result of social processes (Smith, 1998; Burr, 2003). In turn, social interaction and in particular language are central elements in these fabrications of life (Burr, 2003). Individuals produce knowledge about the world as they constantly engage with one another and as such extend beyond what individuals may create independently. Therefore, knowledge is something that people do together and not just that is possessed by individuals. The 'truth' emerges as an understanding of the world particular to factors such as e.g. time and culture. Theories and explanations should therefore be treated as time and culture bound descriptions of human nature not to be taken for granted (Burr, 2003).

Constructions are elaborated upon and developed by using conceptual frameworks and categories that pre-exist in our cultures. Each person in the course of his/her life has

acquired certain common concepts and categories as he/she develops language. In using language in everyday interaction, concepts and categories are reproduced by others who share the same culture and language. In consequence, reflections on the world are influenced and mediated by shared categories and concepts (Smith, 1998). Language, therefore becomes more than simply a way of expressing oneself, it becomes a form of social action that reflects a way of constructing the world within a particular group (Wetherell, 1996).

In summary, the world might be more accurately interpreted as discourses within a culture, rather than real or absolute categories. Without intrinsic qualities defining objects or people, the social world becomes characterised as a product of social processes, interaction and language. Scientific enquiries, within this social constructionist framework, move to the way phenomena or forms of knowledge are achieved by people in interaction. As a result, scientific knowledge seeks to uncover the processes that lead to interpretations rather than simply the constructions in themselves (Burr, 2003).

3.3. Research questions

Potential ecological dissonance affecting hearing teachers when understanding deaf pupils within their hearing frameworks as seen in chapter 1, is likely to limit deaf pupils' opportunities for learning and experiencing well-being as teachers may not meet or respond effectively to deaf pupils' developmental needs in the most efficient way. Interpretations of the notion of the *deaf pupil* in the classroom - that is, as a disabled, minority community pupil or other- are driven by teachers' expectations and attributions.

This research explores the following questions:

- What are teachers' interpretations/constructions of deaf pupils?
- How can cultural perspectives on deaf people assist hearing teachers in understanding deaf pupils?

3.4. Research strategies, methodologies and methods

Teachers' constructions of pupils form part of school life. As teachers interact with pupils, teachers and other elements of school (e.g. curriculum) collective representations and personal constructions of pupils formulated by teachers are conveyed. These phenomena which are present in multiple moments of school and classroom life, can be examined in many different ways.

Teachers convey images of deaf children in their daily interaction. These can be observed in both formal (e.g. classroom) and informal settings (e.g. playground, corridors, school trips).

One type of observation is referred to as 'structure/systematic observation' (Bryman, 2001) where the researcher encodes live or from video, examples of certain pre-determined behaviours. For instance, researchers may want to record behaviours that denote one sort of representation of deaf pupils.

A different type of observation is 'unstructured observation'. In contrast with the previous type of observation, unstructured observation does not set off with a pre-established schedule to guide and record the researcher's activity. Instead, the researcher records in as much detail as possible the behaviour of participants ending up with a narrative account of events that have taken place (Bryman, 2001). In this particular case, the researcher could elaborate texts which describe the interactions between a deaf pupil and his/her teacher and use that as a source of data to identify representations of the deaf pupil.

Unstructured observation allows participation by the researcher him/herself. Alternatively, the researcher can just limit him/herself to develop the narratives while staying in the background of the classroom or playground ('non-participant observation'); or he/she might decide to spend relatively prolonged periods of time immersed in school, during which he/she can observe the behaviours of teachers and pupils and elicit the meanings that they attribute to the school and to each other. This provides not only descriptions of the behaviour but the meanings that these have for pupils and teachers themselves ('participant observation').

Differences arise from these two types of observation. Clearly in the structured observation the researcher is interested in recording in an analytic way, behaviours that allow some sort of quantification. However, this data is found to be rather limited in providing insight into teachers' understandings of deaf pupils. In contrast, participant observation that focuses on exploring meanings as well as recording behaviours is seen as more effective for this purpose.

Teachers' constructions of deaf pupils are also conveyed in the way they talk about deaf pupils with others. Teachers' constructions of their pupils result from individual as well as collective processes in which teachers are immersed. Hargreaves, Hester and Mellor (1975) presented typing processes resulting from teachers' individual understanding of their pupils. Hammersley (1984) said that teachers devoted much of their time in the

staff-room to sharing news and information about pupils. Hammersley (1984) claimed this constant discussion about pupils had a function within the staff-room culture- to collectively make sense of pupils (i.e. create common representations of them). As teachers' constructions of pupils seem to have a collective base that cannot be ignored, research methods that can bring the researcher closer to staff-room talk are likely to provide insights into teachers' constructions of pupils. Listening to teachers talk about deaf pupils is another way of collecting information about their notions of deaf pupils.

Ethnography, using participant observation, is a method for the researcher to observe and listen to teachers with a view to gaining an appreciation of teachers' culture (Bryman, 2001). This qualitative technique allows the researcher to explore the participant world in natural settings, accessing thick descriptions of their meanings that can help the researcher understand their worlds (Geertz, 1973). Methods such as ethnography and participant observation are seen to be adequate to access social representations and teachers' perspectives (Bryman, 2001).

Focus groups are an alternative means to access teachers' conversations about deaf pupils. However, focus groups lead to dominant ideological representations, values and other formations of a social group (e.g. teachers) (Morgan, 1997; Ortí, 1986). In focus group discussions participants reproduce their explanations, ideas, motivations and wills of their actions and understanding of reality (Ortí, 1986). Frank discussion eases the disclosure of personal views (Ortí, 1986) and helps to connect with the emotional part of the individuals, accessing participants' ideas as the conversation flows (i.e. avoiding rationalisations) (Fielding, 1999). In turn, meaning is constructed throughout the conversations in a close, warm and empathetic way. However, the group context allows participants to challenge each other's meanings, something not always easy when approaching participants individually (Bryman, 2001).

Another way of listening to what teachers have to say about deaf pupils is to ask them in a direct way. Qualitative interviewing (unstructured and semi-structured) is another way of accessing teachers' explanations about deaf pupils. Interviews provide teachers' individual perspectives, in contrast to the collective perspective that ethnography and focus groups offer (Bryman, 2001). For instance, Freebody and Power (2001) in exploring Deaf adults identities, uses semi-structured qualitative interviews to elicit Deaf adults' life stories in relation to five pre-established topics: source/extent of deafness; family communication; school experiences; literacy skills; and issues about the course in which they were enrolled. This method gives access to participants' subjective definitions

of being *Deaf* and is a good example of how the researcher can access teachers' constructions of deaf pupils. Freebody and Power (2001) examples show semi-structured interviewing is an adequate method to explore the meaning of being deaf, however in the case of teachers this method distances participants from the more natural group/staff-room setting in which they talk about deaf pupils.

Qualitative interviewing is used with groups in an attempt to explore individuals' views whilst in a group setting. Roald (2002) has carried out qualitative interviews as conversations between pairs of Deaf teachers to explore their views about science learning in deaf pupils. Yet, it is difficult to know if Roald (2002) has analysed teachers' answers as individual views or as shared meanings negotiated during the conversation. Israelite, Ower and Goldstein (2002), similarly have used group interviews to explore how hard of hearing adolescents constructed their individual identities.

When aiming at teachers' discussion about pupils to collect their constructions of deaf pupils, ethnography and focus groups offer the best opportunities to explore teachers' construction of meanings about the *deaf pupil,* as well as their rationales in a group dynamic that reproduced the normality of staff-room talk (Bryman, 2001). Interviews as an alternative, offer a rationalisation of teachers' responses, bringing the researcher closer to a different kind of data i.e. teachers' thoughts and beliefs (Bryman, 2001).

Teachers' constructions of deaf pupils are also implicit in their thoughts and beliefs about deaf pupils. These can be surveyed using questionnaires and surveys. The use of surveys and attitude scales to explore teachers' perceptions is widely used (Cohen and Manion, 1988). For instance, Hallam and Ireson (2003) have explored secondary teachers' attitudes as well as beliefs about ability grouping in the classroom using attitude scales. This method offers the possibility to explore a wide range of topics in a short period of time. In addition, statistical analysis and descriptive statistics are useful to understand consistencies and relations amongst participants' responses (Black, 1999).

Attitude scales are regarded as tools to measure "individuals' predispositions to explain differences between individuals in their reaction to similar stimuli"(Jaspars and Fraser, 1984, p.105). This individualistic conceptualisation of attitudes that overlooks the collective nature of attitudes has been strongly criticised (Jaspars and Fraser, 1984). As formulated by Thomas and Znaniecki, (1918, in Jaspars and Fraser, 1984) the meaning of social values becomes explicit through people's attitudes and behaviour. Therefore, attitudes need to be understood as reflections of the social world of individuals. In turn,

surveying teachers' attitudes gives indications of the social representations that are present in the school (Jaspars and Fraser, 1984).

In this respect, attitude scales enable the researcher to reach a wider number of participants than interviewing techniques. In addition, while providing information about teachers' beliefs individually, attitude scales still allow the researcher to present statements that represent collective attitudes and beliefs.

The strategy chosen in this dissertation to explore teachers' constructions of deaf pupils combines, therefore, both qualitative and quantitative research methods to explore and analyse teachers' construction of deaf pupils in school.

The combination of qualitative and quantitative methods of research is a challenging exercise that can happen involving temporal sequencing (i.e. using one method after the other with different weights) or concurrent (i.e. a fully integrated model, using both methods at the same time and with the same weight in one same study) use of methods.

Some authors (e.g. Guba, 1985; Morgan, 1998) argue that ontological and epistemological commitments are compromised when trying to merge quantitative and qualitative research methods. However, other authors (e.g. Bryman, 2001; Seale, 1999) suggest the complexity of social phenomena calls for combined research strategies by which insight from different angles (qualitative and quantitative) can be achieved. Within this perspective, the relationship between qualitative and quantitative research paradigms is understood as a flexible one, and deterministic conceptualisations of their differences are disregarded (Bryman, 2001; Padgett, 1998). In effect, combined research strategies are increasingly being implemented by using a diversity of methods that operate within an overall qualitative or quantitative strategy (Bryman, 2001; Padgett, 1998). This strategy is seen to safeguard the epistemological coherence of the research activity (Padgett, 1998). In the present research an overall interpretative epistemology drives the research strategy.

As Seale (2000) concludes, the debate about strengths/limitations of combined methods is an ongoing one, in which social scientists need to respond in creative ways to ensure quality research practice. The use of several methods should not affect the ontology and epistemology of the research if the combination of methods aims to contribute from different angles to exploration of the complex natures of teachers' construction of the *deaf pupil*. While this combined research strategy will be followed in this dissertation, this approach does not assume a fixed reality about the notion of *deaf pupil* to be

uncovered by the use of different methods as Seale (2000) warns us. Instead, it is expected that consistency will be promoted by providing quantitative and qualitative insights into teachers' beliefs and interpretations of deaf pupils.

3.5. The participants

The research was carried out in Madrid. The researcher had been working for several years prior to the study with many of the schools that engaged in the research.

3.5.1. The schools

Five schools were initially contacted:

- One mainstreaming primary school specific for deaf pupils.
- Two specific schools with bilingual approaches.
- One secondary school with deaf pupils that was considering a bilingual framework to work with them.
- One infant school with a brand new bilingual project.

Three schools took part in the study - two specific schools with bilingual approaches and an infant school with a brand new bilingual project. The mainstreaming primary school for deaf pupils decided not to participate due to commitments with other research teams. The secondary school with deaf pupils did not engage in the research due to time constraints.

All three schools that decided to take part in the study were working within sign bilingual frameworks. Signing is used for instruction and life in the school. All schools promote the use of sign language and the role of Deaf culture in the education of deaf pupils. Their staff includes hearing teachers, most of them with sign language skills, and Deaf assistants. All three schools are relatively small. Further information about the history, ethos, and pedagogical projects of schools can be found in Appendix 1. Being in touch with Deaf culture, these schools were expected to illustrate how Deaf beliefs and values could influence alternative interpretations of school environments for deaf pupils.

3.5.2. The teachers

Teachers in the study (a total of 25) were almost all hearing. However, there was one Deaf teacher and one hard of hearing teacher. Most teachers had degrees in education, and/or pedagogy with specialisation in hearing and language impairments or speech therapy. Teachers were acquainted with sign language to different levels. Most teachers had good levels of sign language after having done sign language courses run at Deaf clubs and associations. A minority of teachers

that participated in the study used sign supported Spanish, to different degrees of accuracy. Finally, only two teachers were qualified interpreters. All of them were highly motivated and interested in working with deaf children.

3.5.3. The Deaf assistants

A total of five Deaf assistants participated in the research. All of them had training as teachers of Spanish Sign Language and Assistant of Spanish Sign Language[1]. Three assistants had been working in a school with a bilingual approach for more than five years. Their duties in the schools were to assist hearing teachers in the classroom and teach sign language. These three assistants participated in studies 2, 3, and 4. The other two Deaf assistants were younger and had less experience working in the schools. These assistants participated in the piloting of study 4.

3.6. The researcher: situating the researcher in the study

It is not the purpose of this section to make the researcher's self the explicit focus of fieldwork. Instead, details about the researcher's biography and experience in the field will be considered with the goal of understanding the decisions made during research. This consideration will contribute to the transparency of the process of research (Hammersley, 1990). In doing qualitative research, maintaining a self-conscious and critical approach to the fieldwork acknowledges the researcher's own influence in the production and analysis of data, and the social and historic basis of the researcher's productions (Coffey, 1999). This analysis will include the 'emotionality' of engaging with the process of research (Coffey, 1999) and crucially will uncover some reasons as to why the experience of fieldwork and the data became highly emotionally loaded.

I was born into a Spanish working class family. At the age of three I was taken to a bilingual English-Spanish school. My experience of bilingualism was limited to school hours, as my parents had only a very basic command of English. During kindergarten and infant education being in a bilingual school became a very natural experience. My experience stood out from that of my peers in that I had to wear a tie, address my teachers as Miss or Mrs and drink milk at lunchtime. My understanding was that communicating in a language other than Spanish was nothing particularly significant. When I moved on

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[1] An 'Assistant of Spanish Sign Language' is a professional that was introduced by the Ministry of Education as part of an agreement with the Confederación Nacional de Sordos de España in 1994. These professionals have training in Spanish Sign Language teaching and Deaf education. They work in schools for the deaf supporting the development of sign language and a Deaf identity in deaf pupils.

to the junior school I began to understand fully the power dynamics that are established when people do not share a similar language.

Attending a bilingual school meant following an English curriculum, with only two subjects in Spanish. The English curriculum attempted to reflect life in England - our books had Georgian and Victorian Houses, red letter-boxes, drawings of lollipop men and children who like us, wore ties to school. The reality that was constructed through this curriculum was disconnected from life in Spain, often clashing with our own life experiences. When as a teacher I visited England, I realised the importance of contextualising learning and connecting pupils' experiences with the reality created for them in the classroom.

As I progressed through school I began to struggle with the bilingual curriculum, I was labelled by teachers as 'a bit dyslexic', and 'a slow and very lazy pupil'. I experienced the negative effects that labels can have on pupils' performance and well-being. The way teachers talk to you, the location of desks for special needs children and reduced opportunities to participate in school activities such as plays and games, informed others who you were and how you should be treated. Teachers' personal way of understanding a pupil, were transmitted to classmates, nurses, admin staff, family and inevitably to myself, as the pupil. The label that was meant to help teachers support me became a social 'sentence'. A way of understanding pupils was established and regardless of the efforts to change this perception it was difficult for others to see me in any different light. Teachers' and friends' expectations reflected this 'limitation' and inevitably I accepted what I was told I was. On leaving school, I discovered that when others were not aware of the label, I was treated differently. I then had a chance to construct myself differently because others appreciated what I was and not what was missing. Clearly by this time the label had become an irretractable part of who I was.

Attracted by sign language, I first had contact with the Deaf community in Madrid at the age of 17. I already had preconceptions about sign language and deaf people. Along with most of my sign language classmates I thought sign language was universal: unlike most of my classmates I was certain deaf people would be bilingual. I soon discovered that bilingualism had not been encouraged in the education of deaf people, and I struggled to understand the reason. I continued my sign language training and learnt more about deaf people and the Deaf community. When I started my training to become a teacher of the deaf, it became clear that sign language was not part of the curriculum. And after three years of intensive medicalised views of deaf people, my mind was shaped in a way that

did not allow me to see the pupil, only the impairment. Although the training I was receiving in the local Deaf association helped me question certain elements of my teacher training, the lack of formal knowledge and information about the Deaf community meant it felt less 'legitimate', less reliable and reports about the Deaf communities' struggle, unreasonable complaints.

Working as a teacher with deaf children and adults brought some perspective to the training I had received at university. As a trainee in the national school for the deaf I was frontline in the tension between manualist and oralists. This tension was expressed in practical obstacles, including the need to develop new skills (e.g. signing and working with Deaf assistants) and became a more fundamental challenge in seeing deaf pupils and professionals in a different way. As a teacher of deaf adults I was able to see the effects that school experiences had had on deaf adults. Most of my students had attended the school for the deaf. While their ages, command of sign language and skills differed significantly, the emotional block with which they faced the learning environment was collective. Unravelling this emotional experience revealed much about how they saw themselves as 'learners'. These experiences resonated strongly with my own school experience as a child. Aware of the destructive power of labels, I become increasingly interested in listening to teachers' understanding of deaf pupils and their development in school, especially those who had been teaching this particular group of students in the past. This information was important in understanding students and engaging with them using more positive representations of themselves. Later on, and especially as I started my research this theme became the motivation of the first two studies.

In search of a deeper understanding of Deaf issues and Deaf education I joined the Centre for Deaf Studies (CDS) at the University of Bristol. Willing to experience life in a learning institution with a bilingual policy BSL/written English, CDS seemed to offer an opportunity to find out more about bilingualism and education. While I was a fluent Spanish Sign Language user by the time I arrived at the Centre, I had no knowledge of British Sign Language and was eager to learn it. My slow progress in BSL certainly affected my involvement in the centre's life. Meeting any member of staff informally became a increasingly stressful situation, and attending research committees or centre meetings conducted in BSL, although fascinating in one way, became very frustrating. As time went by my command of the language did not improve, and a sense of alienation was aggravated by the fact that BSL lessons were withdrawn from research training.

Although the experience of hearing teachers was the main object of research, the research also constituted an exercise in professional self-discovery. In analysing the ways in which hearing teachers construct deaf pupils in school, I was engaging in a critical reflection around ways of understanding or constructing deaf children. The process of research uncovered contradictions in teachers' ways of understanding deaf children and also highlighted limitations in using Deaf culture to develop teaching practices. This realisation provoked much reflection back to my own teaching practice and relatively poor understanding of the potential for Deaf education. This reflection fed into a greater tension between myself as a researcher and as a teacher. While a critical and inquiring approach was necessary, findings often triggered sadness and frustration.

Researching the experience of fellow hearing teachers certainly added an important emotional component to the experience of fieldwork. As a researcher, I was interested in documenting teachers' experiences. As a former colleague and friend, teachers often confided to me their very personal feelings about their teaching experience hoping both for answers and for support. Listening to my colleagues' stories as a researcher and not just as a friend made me feel at points that I was betraying their trust and our friendship. In contrast, interviews with Deaf assistants were a completely different experience of fieldwork. Approaching Deaf assistants as a hearing teacher and researcher, provoked doubts and reservations towards the research. Initial experiences with Deaf assistants revealed clear distance between the hearing researcher and the Deaf participants. Deaf assistants' interest in the researcher's experience at the Centre for Deaf Studies became a key point in establishing a more collaborative research relationship. Sharing with Deaf assistants the alienation of working in what they considered an ideal working environment, established common ground between the participants and the researcher. Experiencing isolation in our working environments contributed to participants' acceptance of me and facilitated the research process.

As the research was conducted in Spain, Spanish and Spanish Sign Language were the languages used during fieldwork. The need to report teachers' and Deaf assistants' views in written English added to the complex relationship between the data and the participants. As both the transcription of data and the analysis were done in the source language (i.e. Spanish), the process of interpretation and translation did not emerge as a problem until writing up the dissertation. The responsibility of translating the complexities of teachers' worlds to English became a hard task. With the help of a native English speaker it was important to explore the subtlety and nuances of English and Spanish in order to achieve a satisfactory degree of 'tuning' and 'fit' between the two

languages. This exercise entailed not only the translation of words, phrases and idioms but also the meaning wrapped up in the intonation teachers gave to particular phrases. The process of reporting Deaf assistants' comments in written English, added a further level of complexity to the interpreting/translation process. In order to facilitate this process, a Spanish Sign Language interpreter assisted the interpretation and translation of Deaf assistants' contributions. The translation from Spanish Signed Language to written English was done watching the Deaf assistants signing on video to explore the subtleties of facial expressions and so on. A native English speaker, who was fluent in BSL and who could understand the subtlety of sign language, assisted in this translation. Although competent in all languages in which the research took place, it was necessary to draw on these perspectives in order to overcome the significant challenges in reporting both words and convey meaning as intended.

3.7. The research process

The research activity was carried out in four different studies, in which different methods were combined to explore teachers' views, in an overall interpretative fashion. The following section will describe how the four studies were set up and carried out. Table 3.1. sums up the studies conveyed in this research.

Table 3. 1: Summary of studies

Study	Method	Participants	Time-Scale	Chapter
Study 1	**Retrospective ethnography**	School for the deaf (1996-1997 and 1998-2000)	October 2000 - January 2001	Chapter 4
Study 2	**Attitude scale**	28 participants (23 hearing, 4 Deaf, 1 hard of hearing)	January 2001- May 2001	Chapter 5
Study 3	**Focus groups**	28 participants (23 hearing, 4 Deaf and 1 hard of hearing)	April 2001 - May 2001	Chapter 6 and 7
Study 4	**Action research**	4 hearing teachers 3 Deaf assistants	December 2001-June 2002	Chapter 8

In what follows, the four studies are presented.

3.7.1. Study 1: Retrospective ethnography

3.7.1.1. Aim

The aims of this study were:

- To identify social representations of deaf pupils.
- To gather information for developing attitude scales (study 2, see 3.7.2.).

3.7.1.2. Method

Taking into account the researcher's extensive experience working in a school for the deaf, prior the start of the study (see 3.7.1.3.), retrospective ethnography was the method used to identify social representations in the school. The researcher's recent experience in the field was analysed retrospectively drawing on her experiences in the field (Cavendish, 1982; Bryman, 2001).

Data was collected by gathering short and informal notes and existing documents that reminded the researcher of her experience at school. These notes were a starting point to trigger memories of anecdotes that had taken place at the school. All ideas were written down regardless of the theme or topic.

Once this was done, the researcher selected professionals within the school with whom she had worked closely. She attempted to reproduce their talk, conversations that they had had, vocabulary often employed by these professionals. Several techniques like brainstorming were used to produce different words commonly heard in meetings with teachers, by thinking retrospectively about particular meetings that stood out in the researcher's memory. Then words would be seen to match the vocabulary of these professionals.

Finally the researcher, drew on her own experience as a teacher and counsellor and described ways in which she used to see deaf children first while an intern teacher and then as intern counsellor. Attention was also drawn to the vocabulary that she used and new professional jargon that she incorporated while at the school by working with particular professionals.

3.7.1.3. Participants

This first study was conducted drawing retrospectively on the researcher's experience working in a school for the deaf and using a key informant to contrast the results of the analysis:

- *The researcher*

Prior the start of the research, the researcher had been working on two different occasions (1996-1997 and 1998-2000) as a trainee in a school for the deaf. Starting with an internship position as teacher of the deaf, the researcher went

into training as a psycho-pedagogue[2] returning to the school with a school counsellor internship. This extended experience in the school for the deaf allowed the researcher to live together with teachers and other professionals in the school.

The researcher's trainee role at the school, for such a prolonged period of time, provided extensive opportunities to be in a variety of different situations. During those three years, extensive work was carried out. As an intern teacher and school counsellor, her job involved working with deaf pupils, as much as with teachers, lunchtime supervisors, heads of school, Deaf assistants, the school counsellor and speech therapists. Moreover, in the last two years as an intern school counsellor, fundamental importance was given to school life observation as part of different projects of the psycho-pedagogic department in the school. Intensive observations were carried out during classroom practice, staff-room meetings and other situations in which teachers, speech therapists intervention, heads of school were involved; Deaf assistants as well as other professionals were involved.

Participation in such an active and prolonged period of time in the school, made the researcher become part of the school over those training years. However, relationship with teachers and other professionals was clearly shaped as one in which the researcher was a student and the teachers/professionals were her teachers. The researcher was for them, a student- therefore, teachers and professionals had as their duty to train her in the arts and skills of their work. As a result, extensive conversations with most members of school staff regarding deaf children, sign language, Deaf culture; the school, education, teachers' challenges, pupils' behaviour, and research, among many other issues, took place over the three years.

Just two months after leaving the school, the researcher moved to the Bristol to start her MPhil/PhD in the Centre for Deaf Studies.

- *Key informant*

A key informant contributed at the initial stage of the research. At the moment when the informant was contacted, she was working in the school in which the

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[2] "Psicopedagogía" is a degree that can be studied in Spain that combines educational psychology and guidance in education. This has been translated as 'psycho-pedagogy'. The professionals working in this field are knows as 'psicopedagogos'. It has been translated by 'Psycho-pedagogues'.

researcher had previously worked. This informant had a wide working and research experience in the field of Deaf education in Spain. She was a trained psychologist and school counsellor in the psycho-pedagogic department of the deaf school. The informant provided key information about the schools and easy access to other schools.

3.7.1.4. Procedure

The research engaged in the exercise of retrospective ethnography and identified three social representations of the deaf pupils. Once this was done, the researcher met up with the key informant and extensively discussed the social representations that had been uncovered. The researcher also had opportunity to spend some time in the school, observing teachers. In doing so, the researcher observed the four social representations identified in the study.

3.7.1.5. Analysis

Social representations were analysed qualitatively. Analysis attempted to uncover the underpinning structure of these representations and frameworks from which representations could emerge. Another focus of analysis was the vocabulary used in each identified social representation. Results of this study are reported in Chapter 4.

3.7.2. Study 2: Attitude scales

3.7.2.1. Aim

This second study had two aims:

- to survey teachers' beliefs about deaf pupils
- to explore teachers' attitudes towards four social representations of deaf pupils identified in Study 1.

3.7.2.2. Method: attitude scale

Four Likert-type[3] attitude scales were designed, one scale for each representation of the deaf pupil that the researcher had identified in the previous study of retrospective ethnography, as can be seen in Table 3.2.

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[3] Although traditionally Likert scales are 5-point scales, other authors (Rotter, 1972 and Johnson and Dixon, 1984 both cited in Morales, 2000) recommend the use of 6-point scales (Morales, 2000). In this research 6-point Likert type scales were chosen due to two reasons that were potentially considered as beneficial to the study: firstly, 6-point scales seem to discriminate more

Table 3. 2: Four attitudes scales resulting from social representation identified in the retrospective ethnography (Study 1).

Social Representation	Framework	Attitude Scale
'Deaf pupil as disabled'	Clinical or medical	'Deaf pupil as disabled' scale
'Deaf pupil as impaired'	Speech centred	'Deaf pupil as impaired' scale
'Deaf pupils as any other'	Educational	'Deaf pupils as any other' scale
'Deaf pupil as Deaf'	Minority community	'Deaf pupil as Deaf' scale

Each scale included cultural, pedagogical and psychological issues significant to the life and education of deaf pupils, selected by the researcher (see Table 3.3). The scales included:

- Five cultural issues
- Nine pedagogical issues
- Nine psychological issues

These cultural, pedagogical and psychological issues were then written to meet the philosophies of the identified frameworks. As information provided by participants when using an attitude scale is shaped by the initial statements presented to them in the scale, a strategy was developed to write up the statements in the scales maximising consistency (Bryman, 2001). Three fundamental aspects of the identified social representations in Study 1, were present when developing the statements of the attitude scales. These aspects were:

- Content of the framework
- Attributional pattern
- Vocabulary

subtle differences than scales that offer just extremes; secondly, 6-point scales seem to illustrate an equidistant order between responses.

Table 3. 3: Sample statements from attitude scales.

Scale	Statement	
Deaf pupil as disabled	Cultural topic:	Sign Language is an obstacle to the development of speech (statement 106).
	Pedagogical topic:	Success in deaf pupils' school is the result of the use of CI, hearing aids and other hearing devices (statement 93).
	Psychological topic:	Deaf pupils can get in life as far as their disability allows them (statement 65).
Deaf pupils as impaired	Cultural topic:	Sign Language is a tool to support the development of speech (statement 76).
	Pedagogical topic:	Success in deaf pupils' schooling is the result of speech therapy (statement 82).
	Psychological topic:	Deaf pupils can get in life as far as their speech will take them (statement 6).
Deaf pupil as any other	Cultural topic:	Sign Language is a tool to construct knowledge (statement 41).
	Pedagogical topic	Success in deaf pupils' schooling is the result of the work of class assistants and other staff with alternative communication skills (statement 52).
	Psychological topic:	Deaf pupils can get in life as far as any other person (statement 110).
Deaf pupil as Deaf	Cultural topic:	Sign Language is the vehicle of a minority language (statement 78).
	Pedagogical topic	Success in deaf pupils' schooling is the result of the work of class assistants with a bicultural perspective of pupils' education (statement 26).
	Psychological topic	Deaf pupils can get in life as far as their will drives them (statement 35).

A total of 116 statements were designed for the four scales (29 statements per scale). A six point Likert-type scale ranging from 'Strong disagreement' (1) to 'Strong agreement' (6) was provided to express agreement or disagreement with the statements.

Items from all four scales were collated randomly and presented as a single survey. The decision to combine the items of the four scales was designed to avoid the participants being able to identify the constructs that were being explored in the attitude scale. This was meant to reduce some potential effects of "social desirability" in influencing teachers' answers, which are well-known in the attitude scales field (Morales, 2000).

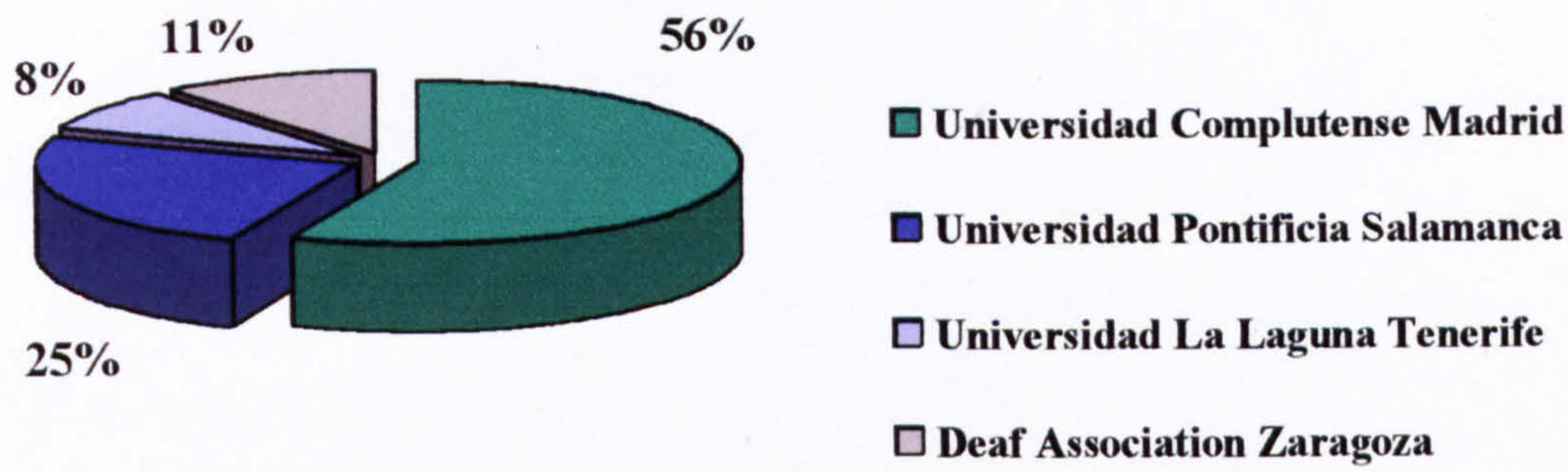
- **Piloting the attitude scales**

Piloting is one of the most important exercises when designing an attitude scale (Morales, 2000). The aim of the pilot study was to analyse the validity and reliability of the scales.

The main question in relation to the validity had to do with conceptual validity - that is, if the scale was measuring what it was aiming to measure. Morales (2000) suggests that clarity in the definition of the construct object of measurements is fundamental. To this end, Study 1 was set up. As explained above a consistent strategy was used to write the statements.

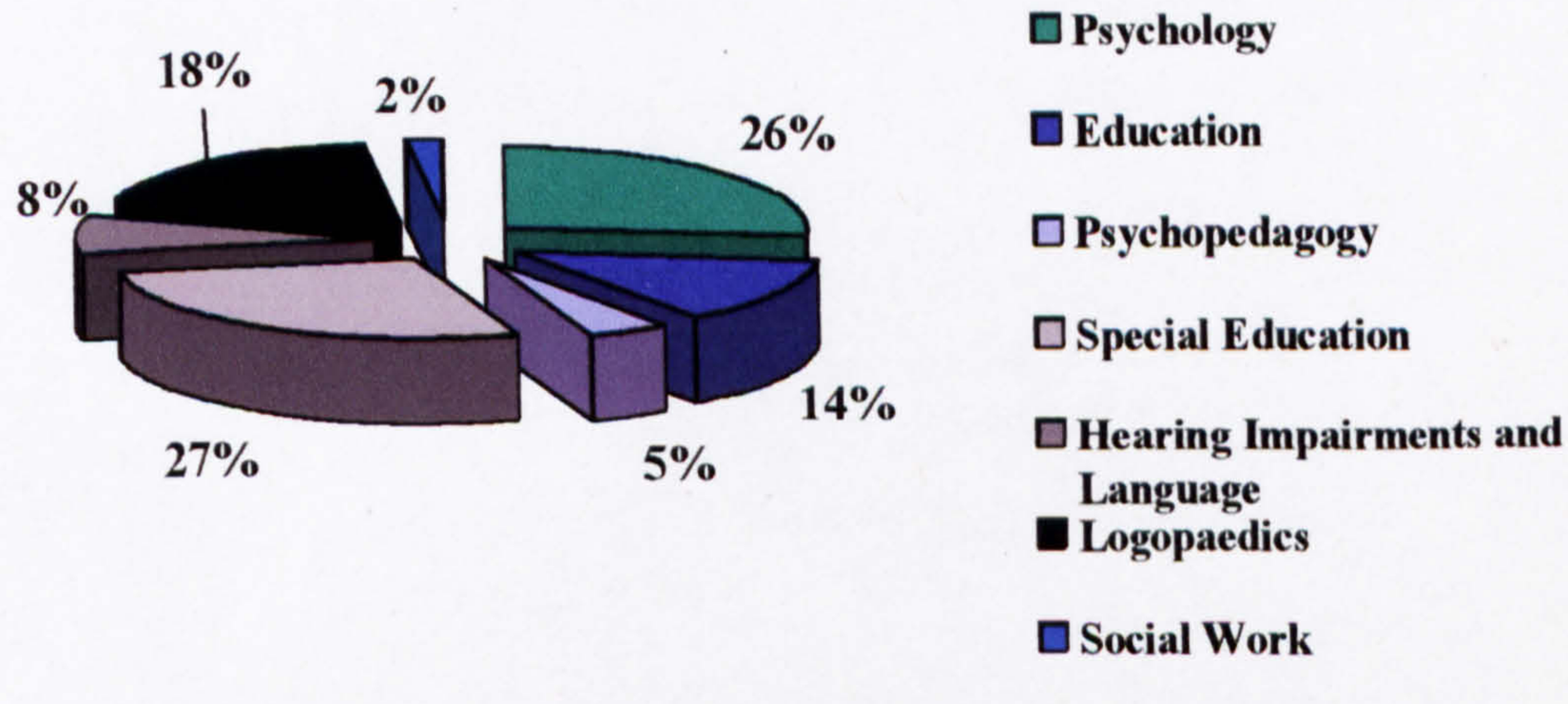
In relation to reliability of the scale, the pilot study aimed to analyse how precise the four attitudes were in measuring the different constructs. A relatively large sample of university students participated in the pilot study (110 participants). Diversity among the sample was important to 'validate' the scales (Morales, 2000). Hence, students from three different universities in Spain and one Deaf association were appointed to take part in the study (see Figure 3.1).

Figure 3. 1: Percentage of participation amongst institutions



All students were studying degrees relevant to work in a school for the deaf (see Figure 3.2.). Whilst most students were in their last years of study, others that had just started were included in the study. This was done with the aim of attaining diversity in regard to their views. Assuming that their professional socialisation might have contributed to a similar way of understanding deaf pupils, new students could contribute views less influenced by their intensive training at university.

Figure 3. 2: Percentage of participants in each degree



Reliability analysis showed that all four scales had satisfactory reliability scores (Crombach analysis).

- The 'Deaf pupils as disabled' scale had initially 29 statements. When considering the reliability of the scale several amendments were made. Six statements were dropped as conceptually not appropriate. Once the scale was reduced to 23 statements, Crombach reliability analysis was carried out. Initial analysis showed $\alpha = .615$. To increase the scale's accuracy six more statements were dropped (S. 2, 3, 12, 14, 16, 34), improving the instrument's reliability ($\alpha = .800$; 17 statements). The final version of the scale included 23 statements, only 17 statements were necessary to measure teachers' attitudes accurately.

- A similar situation was observed when analysing the reliability of the 'Deaf pupils as impaired' scale. As in the previous case, seven statements were dropped to increase the conceptual reliability. Initial Crombach analysis showed low reliability ($\alpha = .421$). Reliability was improved ($\alpha = .710$; 16 statements) by dropping seven statements (S. 5, 6, 9, 23, 25, 33 and 41). This scale had a total of 22 statements, only 16 statements were used to measure teachers' attitudes.

- In 'Deaf pupils as any other' scale seven statements were dropped for conceptual reasons. Reliability for the remaining 22 statements was initially moderate ($\alpha = .633$). Three statements were dropped for a slight improvement in the instrument. Corrected reliability for the scale was $\alpha = .711$ (19 statements). The final version of the scale included a total of 22 statements, however only 19 were necessary to measure teachers' attitudes accurately.

- The 'Deaf pupils as Deaf' scale was very precise in its measurement. After dropping six statements to improve the conceptual reliability, the instruments showed a high accuracy ($\alpha = .799$). The final scale included 23 statements.

The four scales were merged into one single survey questionnaire. The survey included 90 statements (see Appendix 3). Table 3.4 illustrates the number of statements included in the complete instruments (column 2); column 3 shows the number of statements that were to be used to measure teachers' attitudes.

Table 3. 4: Number of statements in the scales

Attitude scale	Total number of statements	Statements to measure attitudes
'Deaf pupil as disabled'	23	17
'Deaf pupil as impaired'	22	16
'Deaf pupils as any other'	22	19
'Deaf pupil as Deaf'	23	23

As a result of the pilot study, final tuning of statements was done and for reasons of clarity the wording of some statements was reconsidered.

3.7.2.3. Participants

Five schools were contacted by telephone by the researcher several months ahead of the study and invited to participate in the research. Three schools were interested in taking part in the study (see Appendix 1). In all three schools, teachers participating in the study were most of the staff working in school.

- In school 1, 14 teachers participated in the focus group (see Section 3.7.3.3). Out of those 14 teachers, 11 filled in the survey and sent it back. Of these, three were Deaf professionals.
- In school 2, two focus groups were arranged, however only one focus group was carried out due to school's problems with time. Seven teachers had filled in the survey, and sent it to the researcher. From these, only one was a hard of hearing professional.
- Finally in school 3, eleven teachers took part in the focus group, only one teacher did not fill in the survey. Ten surveys were returned to the researcher- one was by a Deaf professional.

3.7.2.4. Procedure

Schools were selected to carry out the study. Documents explaining the research aims and a reminder of the allocated dates for the researcher's visit were sent to the centres.

Once at the schools, teachers were gathered in a comfortable place. Teachers were also participating in Study 3 (see Section 3.7.3.3). Once the focus group for Study 3 was finalised, the attitude scale was distributed to the teachers. Discussion prior to completion of the attitude scales was later found to be an advantage for the study, as engaging participants in discussing the object of study, have been found to make participants' attitudes more salient, benefiting attitude measurement (Potter, 2002).

The researcher gave brief instructions, giving special emphasis to three points:

- answers to the surveys should reflect their own opinion and therefore should be filled in privately.
- there were no right or wrong answers to the statements.
- it was important not to leave unanswered statements.
- the survey regarded deaf pupils – that is, deaf children with profound and moderate deafness and no other conditions.

No participants expressed doubts about how to proceed in working with the survey. Surveys were returned to the researcher by post two weeks after the visit to the schools.

3.7.2.5. Analysis

Two types of analysis were carried out. In the first place a descriptive study exploring teachers' beliefs about the different issues from the different perspectives was carried out. To do so, the statements were grouped by cultural, pedagogical and psychological topics. Each question in the different topics had four statements that came from the different attitude scales. Then, frequencies and percentages for the answers to each of the statements were calculated.

In the second place, a different analysis was carried out using inferential statistics. In turn, a preliminary analysis was carried out to see if the views presented in the four scales were independent of each other. Then, teachers' scores in the different scales were used to explore how teachers combined their different views when thinking about the deaf pupil. The results of the scales did not attempt to generalise to a wider teacher population. Inferential statistics were used to illustrate how teachers in this study combined the different views when thinking about the deaf pupils by using

specific statistical parameters. The aim of the study was to explore teachers' perceptions of the deaf pupils and not to establish rules about teachers' behaviours by using the strengths of quantitative methods. However, generalisation from the study would have not been possible taking into account the limitation imposed by the small sample used in the study.

The scales were then corrected and a score was then calculated. Teachers scoring 3 or below were categorised as not identifying with the perspective presented in the scale, while teachers scoring 4 or over were seen as complying with the views of the scale. Once scores were calculated a difference of means was carried out to see if the four perspectives were indeed different from one another using t-Student test. Having verified the fact that all four scales were measuring different constructs, the study went further in analysis of the potential relationships of teachers' answers to the different scales. To that effect, correlations were calculated to explore the relationships between the different perspectives underlying the constructions of the deaf pupil for these teachers. Findings on the attitude scales analysis are reported in Chapter 5.

3.7.3. Study 3: Focus groups

3.7.3.1. Aim

With the aim of obtaining a snap shot of teachers' talk about the deaf pupil, Study 3 provided a space for D/deaf and hearing professionals to discuss deaf pupils and their education. There were two targets of these discussions:

- Identifying different constructions/images of the deaf child used by teachers.
- Exploring teachers' understanding of deaf pupils.

3.7.3.2. Method

Focus groups was the method selected. The questions proposed in the focus groups were carefully selected. These questions attempted to collect information about how teachers understood the education of deaf pupils, at the same time that teachers constructed images of deaf pupils. The engagement of the teacher in these discussions elicited social representations of deaf pupils that allowed an analysis of construct formation, as well as contents impacting on the constructions. The conversation focused mainly on educational matters and the constructions offered by

teachers were likely to be used by them to guide their practice at school. The questions that guided the focus group discussion were:

- What are the three objectives of the contemporary education of deaf pupils?
- What are the challenges in the education of deaf pupils?
- How is it working with deaf pupils (not the methodology)?
- What are the obstacles in the education of deaf pupils?
- What is a deaf child like?

3.7.3.3. Participants

All teachers that engaged in Study 2 did also participate in Study 3. A total of 29 teachers participated in the group discussions. A total of five focus group discussions were organised. Focus groups were organised in this way:

- In School 1, two group discussions were carried out. Each focus group had seven participants. In both focus groups, Deaf assistants and hearing teachers participated together. An interpreter (Spanish/Spanish Sign Language) was used to facilitate communication.
- In School 2, one focus group was carried out. In it, four members of the staff participated out of which one identified herself as being hard of hearing. No interpreters were used as the preferred language of the hard of hearing teacher was spoken Spanish.
- In School 3, two focus groups were completed. One group had six participants, and the other five. Only one Deaf teacher participated on this occasion, no interpreter was used as this teacher usually manages small meeting lip-reading and speaking.

3.7.3.4. Procedure

The researcher contacted the schools by telephone several months ahead of the study. A reminder was sent to the centres including a document with the details of the research project a month prior the starting date of the data collection, with the aim of establishing a timetable that would allow the researcher to coordinate the activity in each school. Once arrangements were made with the schools a timetable was set up with every school to develop the focus groups. The dates were established and the necessary resources such as video cameras, tapes and interpreters were arranged.

As the researcher was known to most professionals, a relatively short time was spent introducing the researcher herself. All focus groups opened directly with a brief introduction of the research reviewing the document sent to the schools to present the project (see Appendix 2).

Five questions (see Section 3.7.3.2.) were initially presented to participants, and they then were left to themselves to decide the starting point. This provoked some differences between the order in which questions were discussed among the five focus groups. However, the researcher favoured teachers' freedom, with the aim of achieving as natural a school discussion as possible.

Once the discussion had been initiated, the researcher asked the questions if teachers had forgotten any of them. Discussion went on for 20 to 30 minutes. This time limitation was imposed by teachers' busy timetables. All participants showed themselves enthusiastic and participated actively in the discussions. Consequently, the researcher's role was to listen. All group discussions were audiorecorded or videorecorded.

3.7.3.5. Analysis

Once data was collected, focus groups were transcribed and analysed using qualitative software named Maxqda. Open coding was an initial stage of analysis. From there, patterns within the focus groups were identified. Qualitative software used proved very useful in organising data. In addition, teachers' constructs of deaf pupils were analysed drawing on Kelly's *Theory of Personal Constructs* (see Section 2.5.1). Results of Study 3 are presented in Chapters 6 and 7.

3.7.4. Study 4: Action research

3.7.4.1. Aim

Studies 2 and 3 pointed out hearing teachers' ability to use cultural perspectives to understand deaf children. However, from the evidence collected, teachers were clearly applying a cultural understanding of the child mainly to issues related with pupils' communication experience.

Culture was seen to affect the teacher-pupil relationship (i.e. empathy). Clearly, if a solid relationship between deaf pupils and their hearing teachers was aimed for, teachers needed to engage with the deaf child's experience by increasing their capability of seeing life as a whole from a Deaf cultural perspective. Action research offered the possibility of analysing participants' realities at the same time that it encouraged teachers to construct deaf pupils within Deaf frameworks (Rubio and Varas, 1999). In turn, an engagement with the Deaf community and culture was suggested as an effective way of coming closer to this goal.

Study 4 proposed:

- To explore Deaf culture and values as an important mediating mechanism to deal with culture clash between deaf pupils and their hearing teachers.
- To promote in hearing teachers a deeper understanding of Deaf culture and values that would enable them to understand deaf pupils and teaching practice from a minority community framework.

3.7.4.2. Method

Study 4 presented scenarios in which cultural barriers interfere with hearing teachers' and deaf pupils' relationships. Hearing teachers had a chance to explain their understanding of the situations proposed showing what could be the key issues. Then, hearing teachers were confronted with Deaf assistants' views on the same scenario and were asked to comment on Deaf assistants' opinions. Finally, they were asked how a residence in the Deaf community was necessary to conceptualise their educational aims and relationship with the pupils.

For this final study, ideas and opinions from hearing and Deaf professionals were collected to construct a different way of understanding deaf pupils' school experience. The study was divided into two different stages, for which different methods to collect data were used:

- Observation: The first stage was a preliminary stage where information was gathered in order to prepare and elaborate tools and topics to work in the focus groups (second part of the study);
- Focus groups: The second one implied the actual work with the Deaf and hearing professionals. For this part of the study a series of workshops were held. In

them, the teachers were confronted with questions and vignettes previously elaborated for each session in a focus group dynamic.

1. Observation and vignette construction

The observations were carried out in School 3. The aim was to take real scenes from school life. For this reason, the researcher spent one week (December, 2002) observing teachers and pupils in natural situations in the school (classroom, playground and dining-room). To maximise the researcher's observation in school, the researcher had reviewed literature (e.g. Mindess, 1999; Young, Ackerman and Kyle, 2000; Ladd, 1998) regarding cultural clashes between Deaf and hearing people that had provided background to distinguish cultural clashes from other types of conflict between teachers and pupils (e.g. personality). Once the researcher had spotted a situation in which a potential cultural clash was taking place between pupils and teachers, she would question teachers and pupils for an interpretation of the events from their perspective in an informal way. This interpretation would be recorded to analyse the potential culture clash taking place.

Once the observations concluded, the researcher engaged in transforming the observed data into vignettes. The vignette techniques present participants with one or more scenarios to which they have to describe how they would respond (Bryman, 2001) or what is their understanding of the scenario (Miles and Hubberman, 1994). These vignettes illustrated scenarios from everyday life in a classroom where deaf pupils and hearing teachers differ due to cultural reasons. Scenes tried to define how the deaf pupils' understanding of the situation is different from the teachers' interpretation of the same event, and therefore how the attributions are misleading. Also, three vignettes presented situations of hearing teachers in the Deaf community. In this case, the vignettes presented scenarios in which Deaf adults and hearing teachers' interpretations were different on the basis of their cultural perspectives. A total number of 16 vignettes were designed.

Vignettes then were tested. In March 2002, the researcher went back to pilot the vignettes in similar situations as the ones that would take place months later. The

researcher went to School 2, and gathered a group of hearing teachers. All 16 vignettes were presented and teachers gave their views on the contents and interpretations that the scenarios suggested in the vignettes offered. Likewise, the researcher called a meeting with the Deaf assistants in school 3 and piloted the vignettes with them. At the end of this piloting period, 12 vignettes were chosen to be used in Study 4 (see Appendix 4). Four vignettes were excluded from the study, as they did not initiate discussion among teachers.

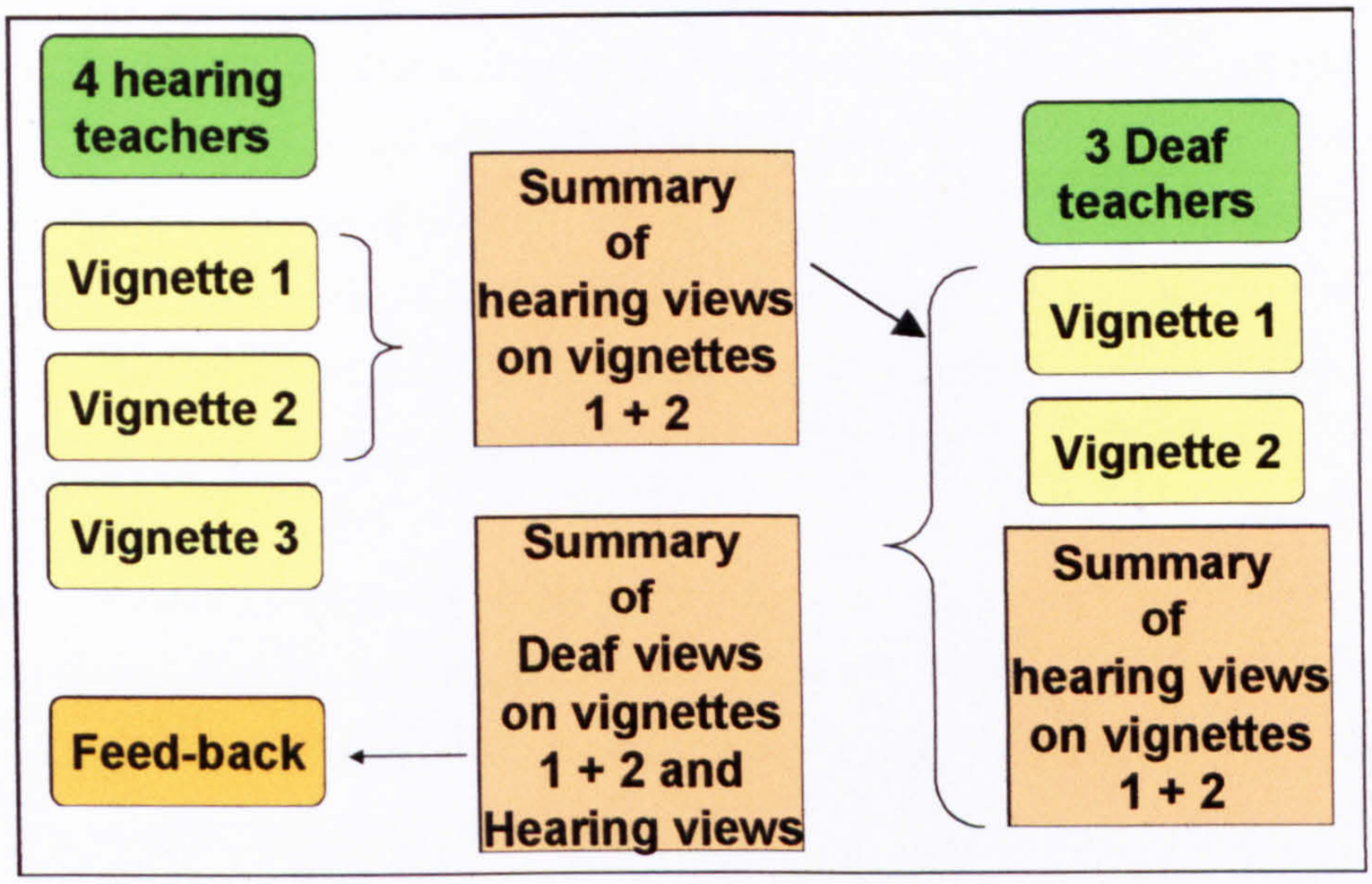
2. Focus groups

Focus groups dynamics allowed Deaf and hearing professionals to share their understanding of the topics in a group of peers. Vignettes were organised in units. Each unit included three vignettes: two vignettes, which depicted school life scenarios; and one about hearing teachers in the community.

This way of working with the vignettes would give the researcher a chance to reflect in each unit on the cultural awareness of hearing teachers and their engagement with the Deaf community as a key element in the educational provision in the school (i.e. affecting the perception of the pupils, the curriculum, the educational relationship, the effects of school experience in the pupils). Through teachers' discussions, relevant information about the appropriateness of a cultural change of perspective in hearing teachers, as an important aspect of making the curriculum fully accessible to their pupils was presented as a means to construct a successful school experience for both pupils and teachers.

Discussions among Deaf and hearing professionals took place independently in order to provide participants with their own space (Deninger, 1983). The study analysed counterparts' responses to other professionals' opinions. So, each group commented on the responses given by the other group, the researcher being a mediator between the groups in this process. A scheme can be found in Figure 3.3:

Figure 3. 3: Study 4 scheme



This approach attempted to encourage Deaf and hearing professionals to construct a common standpoint from where to understand deaf pupils' school experience.

3.7.4.3. Participants

This study was carried out in Spain thanks to the involvement of four hearing teachers from School 3 and three Deaf assistants from School 1. Hearing teachers in School 3 were chosen on the basis of having a positive cultural outlook on the deaf pupil. The element that determined the researcher's choice for the Deaf assistants in School 1 was based on their experience working in schools with a bilingual approach and collaborating with hearing staff in the classroom.

The decision to choose the participants from different schools was one of an ethical, rather than practical nature. The content of the focus groups was foreseen to describe conflicting views of the deaf pupils, on hearing teachers' skills to teach deaf pupils and controversial issues about engagement of hearing teachers to the deaf community. These topics had potential sensitivities amongst hearing and Deaf staff in the schools as Deninger's (1983) study exploring similar issues illustrated. In order to avoid unnecessary tensions between the hearing and Deaf staff in the schools, the researcher decided to use staff from two different schools and in the pilot study prior to the study too. By doing this, damage to hearing-Deaf staff relationship was minimised.

3.7.4.4. Procedure

Two groups were convened: one group was composed of Deaf assistants with relevant experience in Deaf culture and deaf children's education; the other, of hearing teachers working with deaf pupils. Deaf and hearing professionals were divided into different groups to allow them to feel as free and comfortable as possible to express their opinions. This decision came about as a result of some of the limitations observed in Study 3, in which focus groups were convened with Deaf and hearing professionals together (see Section 3.9).

The study was carried out in two periods of time of two weeks each, allowing one month between the two periods. Although initially this was seen as a limitation due to the researcher's availability to travel to Spain, it was found that allowing that intermediate period of time had given hearing teachers space to reflect and discuss among themselves and with other professionals about the work done in the focus groups. Each week the researcher arranged two 20-minute focus groups sessions with the hearing teachers and one-hour sessions with the Deaf assistants (sessions with Deaf assistants were carried out in Spanish Sign Language).

The richness of teachers' experience, and their willingness to participate in the study made time insufficient. However, teachers' busy timetable did not allow more time for the research. In spite of the time limitations, the study was successfully carried out. A total of eight sessions were carried out with hearing teachers and three sessions with Deaf assistants. During that number of sessions teachers worked over eight different vignettes and had two feedback sessions.

Prior to the start of the study the researcher had foreseen two different roles. To do so, the researcher drew on teachers' comments to raise awareness about essential aspects depicted on the scenario. The researcher had also to mediate between the hearing and Deaf groups of professionals. In order to do so, the researcher audio-recorded the sessions with hearing teachers, and then worked at home summarising hearing teachers main views. Surprisingly to the researcher, a third role has to be adopted by the researcher *in situ*. The researcher had to resort to her role as previous teacher working in the school to alleviate the frustrations and pressure sometimes put on teachers by the topics that emerged during the focus groups.

This summary was then presented to the Deaf assistants. Again, the researcher would present the vignette and afterwards the hearing teachers' conclusions. Intervention with Deaf assistants attempted to elicit ways in which hearing teachers could come closer to a deeper understanding of a deaf child from a Deaf standpoint. The video-footage of the sessions carried out with the Deaf assistants would be then summarised and presented to the hearing teachers on the next session. However, from the beginning of the second period of research with hearing teachers, the researcher felt the need to come closer to the teachers. In this respect, the researcher tried to keep some distance from the participants; however, at specific times, when talking about hearing teachers' limitations as teachers of the deaf the researcher came closer to the teachers by drawing on her hearing teacher status and including herself in the processes of discovering "our" limitations/improvement. This strategy helped the researcher to smooth/dilute the tension and emotions felt and expressed by teachers throughout the focus group discussion.

3.7.4.5. Analysis

A cross case analysis (Miles and Hubermann, 1994) of the data collected in Study 4 was done in order to explore the hearing teachers' discussions to avoid repetition of themes resulting from reporting teachers' responses to each individual vignette. Once the transcriptions of the sessions with the hearing teachers were completed, the researcher started by exploring the themes in the hearing focus groups discussions across the vignettes (cases). This analysis was done with qualitative research software Maxqda. Once this was done, a grid was created to illustrate the cross case analysis across the themes that emerged from the vignettes discussion of hearing teachers. Deaf assistants' views reported to the hearing teachers were explored to find out which themes facilitated teachers' transitions in perspective. Findings of Study 4 are reported in Chapter 8.

However, there are limitations in the research project and lessons which were learned in the study of teachers' worlds are provided in what follows.

3.8. Limitations to the research

In reflecting on the research strategy and the research process several lessons can be learned for future research.

The use of retrospective ethnography to design the attitude scales can be argued to be potentially biased by the researcher's recollections, memories, and even interests (see Section 3.6). However, what became clear was that grounding the attitude scale in an ethnographic experience allowed the researcher to analyse how thoughts and ideas coming from discussions and observations of teachers can benefit the construction and application of quantitative methods. Taking this approach to attitude scale construction also tries to prevent the tendency for categorising people according to pre-established categories that can potentially be disconnected from the reality of the fieldwork. While quantitative methods that present verbal statement constrain participants' opportunities to explain life in their own terms, strategies like this can be put into place to ground research methods design in teachers' views and understandings.

Focus groups that included Deaf and hearing professionals together as described in Study 3, were seen to limit the participation of Deaf professionals in the discussions. While the rationale of putting Deaf and hearing professionals together was to put Deaf assistants and hearing teachers at the same level i.e. as professionals in charge of the education of deaf children, the result was counterproductive. On the one hand, the fact of using oral Spanish and interpreters to give access to Deaf assistants allowed less opportunity for Deaf professionals to participate due to interpreting delay. But, perhaps more significant is the fact that Deaf assistants did not feel comfortable to express their views openly. This was not expected by the researcher. Had Study 3 been carried out in a different way - that is with Deaf and hearing professionals separate- participation of Deaf assistants would have been more pronounced. Lessons were learnt from this study that were then applied in Study 4.

3.9. Ethical considerations

Following the British Sociological Association (BSA) recommendations ethical considerations were taken into account to safeguard the interests of the participants involved in this research. To this effect, several decisions affecting the research process were made. These have been presented as part of the research process (see Section 3.7); however they will now be briefly discussed.

Participants were invited to participate in the study and supplied with information about the research project to enable an informed choice and consent (see Section 3.7.1). Research was

carried out to fit in with teachers' diaries, sometimes to the detriment of the research activity. Time was maximised by the use of audio and video recorders to collect their discussions. In effect, when participants felt uneasy in front of the video cameras, despite proper reassurance about anonymity and confidentiality of the data in the tapes by the researcher, accommodations were made to keep some participants out of shot.

Decisions regarding participation of teachers in the different studies and pilot studies were taken, reflecting both on the convenience of teachers and benefits for the research project. In this regard, the decision to involve two schools to carry out Study 4 from which conflicting ideas between Deaf and hearing members of staff were expected by the researcher, was made on the basis of participants' well-being. Selecting Deaf and hearing professionals from different school minimised the risk of damaging professionals' relationships (see Section 3.7.4.3). In addition to this, the well-being of participants was preserved by playing on the different roles of the researcher (see Section 3.7.4.4.)

The researcher reported the findings accurately and truthfully to the best of her abilities. To do so, great care and time was put into the translation into English of teachers' comments and the overall writing up process. In response to school participation and interest, the researcher has committed to go back to the school to present the finished work, as English is not accessible to most professionals. In response to Deaf professionals' petition to translate the thesis in a book that reaches professionals and Deaf community, the researcher has committed to engage actively in the dissemination of the work through presentations and publications in Spanish.

Chapter 4

Social representations of deaf pupils: Study 1

4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents four 'social representations' of deaf pupils that emerged through the process of retrospective ethnography highlighted in Chapter 3. These representations strictly emerged from a particular bilingual-bicultural school in Spain, and hence reflect the situations of that school and their teachers. These representations portray deaf pupils from different frameworks. The way in which 'deafness' is understood by teachers in relation to the child is highly significant in constructing images of deaf pupils. The school may become an arena in which different social representations of the deaf child co-exist, are in conflict or in denial.

In turn, the vehicles of social representations within school are teachers and classroom assistants with their various personal and professional experiences. Social representations about deaf pupils are likely to influence teachers' attitudes and beliefs. In turn these representations become part of teachers' interpretative system of beliefs informing their understanding of pupils. This interpretative system not only allows teachers and classroom assistants a way of understanding pupils, but informs the education process for the child.

To better describe how different social representations emerged in this particular school setting, a brief description of the many changes that affected this school in a relatively short period of time will follow to help the reader situate the findings in this particular context.

4.2. Overview of the development of a school for the deaf

This section presents a brief historical overview of the school in which the researcher was immersed to represent in an accurate way the circumstances in which teachers and deaf pupils were developing an experience of bilingual-bicultural education.

Coming from a strong oral tradition and following reports on the problems of oral education and on the potential of sign language, a major change in Spanish Deaf education took place in Spain. Mainstreaming was perceived as an appropriate option in

Deaf education and legislation was put in place. The imminent advent of mainstreaming meant the departure of many deaf pupils and progressive teachers from the school. As a result, fewer children were being sent to the school for the deaf, and those who were, had mainly severe deafness or/and other disabilities. Signed supported Spanish was seen by professionals in Deaf education (teachers, speech therapists...) in Spain to be the best way of supporting these pupils and so was introduced in the school.

To revitalise the school, the head of school and the deputy head put together an innovative project for what had been a traditional oral school for the deaf. This incorporated two elements, namely the opening of the school to hearing children –to fulfil some form of mainstreaming- and the introduction of sign language as a tool for instruction for deaf children (i.e. based on bilingual-bicultural principles) –to overcome the limitations of previous oral experiences. This project was finally approved and initiated with the arrival at the school of new professionals (i.e. Deaf teachers, Deaf assistant and school counsellor specialising in Deaf education) who had the skills and understanding to develop it.

Around the same time, a new generation of teachers, educated in the new constructivist theories of education underwriting the 1990 education law were coming into the school with new understandings of special education. The traditional special education model focused in disabilities and rehabilitation was weakening while new perspectives, which considered both deaf pupils' educational needs and alternative ways of meeting them were emerging imminently.

In a relatively short (1980-2000) period of time different approaches to teaching deaf pupils were introduced in the school, namely a strict oral tradition, total communication, bilingual-biculturalism and constructivism in education. As existing teachers could not be required to implement the bilingual-bicultural approach they continued to deliver education through signed Spanish. This created a situation in which a component of the staff team was practising bilingual-bicultural communication while the reminder of the staff team continued to practise signed supported Spanish. What becomes clear is that while the way teachers' practice did not always change significantly, each philosophy brought with it a different understanding of the deaf child.

In what follows, a description and subsequent analysis of the 'social representations' that emerged from the different frameworks of understanding introduced in school is presented below.

4.3. Four social representations of deaf pupils

Four social representations of deaf pupils were identified by engaging in an exercise of retrospective ethnography (see Section 3.6.1). Initially, three representations of deaf pupils shared by professionals working in schools with bilingual-bicultural approaches were described. These three representations, as will be explained in turn, resonate with broadly medical and cultural narratives of deaf children (see Section 1.7). Following validation process (see Section 3.6.1) a fourth representation of deaf pupils was identified. This fourth representation offered an educational understanding of the child, grounded in the Spanish interpretation of constructivism in education (see Section 2.2.1)

The identified social representations of deaf pupils constitute four frameworks that can be summarised in Table 4.1. Intentionally there is a separation between the social representation of the pupil that is closer to an image and coincides with particular uses of labels in common talk (i.e. impaired or disabled or Deaf) and the frameworks underpinning such representations. This separation will be consistently used throughout this and following chapters.

Table 4. 1: Social representation of deaf pupils and frameworks

Social representation	Framework
'Deaf pupil as disabled'	Clinical or medical
'Deaf pupil as impaired'	Speech-centred
'Deaf pupil as any other'	Educational
'Deaf pupil as Deaf'	Minority community

The following sections will further explore in more detail the four social representations.

4.4. Deaf pupils as disabled: the medical framework

This framework saw pupils to be disabled, as suffering from a disorder, namely deafness. As a disabling condition, deafness prevents 'normal' development. Educating deaf pupils within this framework, meant 'normalising' deaf children as much as possible. To this end, professionals should focus their intervention on encouraging deaf children to

perform as closely as possible to hearing children. This process incorporated: restoring hearing, the use of hearing aids and surgical intervention wherever possible. In addition to this, intensive oral rehabilitation was needed. Intelligence was seen as crucial in determining education progress and in this respect there was some degree of scepticism with respect to the cognitive ability of most deaf pupils. Within this framework there is an assumption that deaf pupils were, if not innately less intelligent, then slower learners in comparison with their hearing peers.

Clearly, deafness was an impairment and the root of the child's disability. One of the elements that stood out in this representation was its focus on the *dis-ability* of the child and its strong links to medical categories and terminology. This construction ruled out social interpretations of disability, which separated impairment from disability (see Section 1.7.1). Deaf children's disability is seen not as a result of communication barriers in the environment, potentially overcome by sign language. Rather, disability is located in the body of the child, and only by restoring hearing can it be overcome (Corker, 1998; 1993).

This perspective says little for deaf pupils' education, development and achievement in all areas of later life. Signing was considered a system of 'mime' and, as such, was seen as detrimental to deaf pupils' language development. In turn, Deaf assistants were not considered positive academic role models for deaf pupils, primarily because of their use of sign language with pupils and staff, something considered detrimental to the acquisition of speech. Success in any kind of education including bilingual-bicultural programmes relied predominantly on the child's intelligence and residual/restored hearing in the child.

4.5. Deaf pupils as impaired: the speech-centred framework

The speech centred framework was built upon the idea that deaf pupils had an impairment in language and communication. Deafness was acknowledged to be a medical condition severely limiting for the child's development. The opportunity to develop oral skills through the use of their hearing was seen to be significantly restricted. While medical intervention (e.g. cochlear implants) and hearing aids were seen to be crucial requisites in order to achieve speech, this was not seen to be a solution for all deaf pupils. Intensive speech therapy, however, was seen to be beneficial to all pupils as the way in which the problem could be relatively overcome (i.e. cued-speech, signed communication).

Signing was perceived to be an aid to support speech acquisition. Thought to be initially beneficial, signing would be gradually replaced by speech training. The belief that rehabilitation was bound to help most deaf pupils, shed some positive light on the perceptions of pupils' abilities. Deaf pupils were certainly seen to be limited through a lack of 'normal' hearing. However restoration of speech ability was thought to improve deaf pupils' condition, achieving as a result a certain level of normality. While speech acquisition was valued for its role in the rehabilitation of deafness, speech-therapists (with training in medical models of deafness) contemplated bilingual-bicultural practices with caution, considering primarily a tool to develop speech.

The promotion of speech in the child was the key area of convergence between speech therapy and bilingual-bicultural approaches. Divergence emerged in other areas of the bilingual-bicultural policy, for example in support for the role of Deaf assistants. Within this speech-centred framework Deaf assistants' role was constructed as an opportunity to illustrate the importance of speech for pupils in their future lives.

In summary, the medical and speech-centred frameworks both considered deaf children to be deviant from a 'normal' hearing standard. The two approaches differed in their perception of the child's ability; the medical framework being rooted in disability and the speech-centred framework in an impairment in language and communication. The medical framework perceived sign language to be a barrier to speech development and the speech-centred framework, considered sign language a potential and transitory aid in acquiring speech.

4.6. Deaf pupils as any other pupil: the educational framework

The educational framework as understood in the context of Spanish constructivist education (see Section 2.2.1) rests on the belief that, first and foremost deaf children have the same potential as any other children. The main condition on their educational achievement was the provision of an appropriate education- one with a child centred approach. Within this framework deaf pupils had the potential to achieve, alongside their hearing peers. As a result, unlike medical and impaired frameworks (see Sections 4.4 and 4.5), teachers' expectations were of positive and high achievement.

However, as Young, Greally and Nugent (2003) suggest the 'child first, deafness second' approach, entails a separation of the deafness from the child. There is also an assumption that the effects of deafness are not a fundamental aspect of how the child will develop. Within this approach, teachers were not encouraged to consider the impact of deafness in understanding and promoting the deaf child's development. In thinking of the child as the 'same as other children', teachers built up a normalising feeling which provided them with a positive feeling of competence, similar to the one observed in hearing parents (Young, 1999; Young, Greally and Nugent, 2003).

Crucially, success in educational terms was dependent on the quality of education provided. In order to achieve this, a holistic approach to pupils' needs was taken in which general needs (e.g. cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional) were taken as seriously as needs specifically resulting from deafness (e.g. cochlear implants). Addressing pupils' needs also required consideration of appropriate communication strategies (i.e. signed augmentative systems and sign language). The use of signed systems and sign language was welcomed as an efficient way of establishing rapport with deaf pupils and constructing knowledge in the classroom.

Within this framework, bilingual-bicultural programmes offered opportunities to address overall development in the child with the ultimate aim of acquiring abilities to manage in both the hearing world and in Deaf –led environments. Deaf assistants were therefore regarded as valuable role models for pupils' development and to this end a mixed Deaf/hearing staff was considered positively.

In summary the educational framework considered, from a holistic perspective, the characteristics and individual needs of the child. Within this framework, the ethos of the deaf school would be to make education accessible to deaf pupils by adapting to their needs. This educational philosophy would foster positive expectations for deaf pupils – to become equal, competent and active members of society. This framework represented a clear philosophical separation from the medical and the speech-centred frameworks. However, this approach entailed certain risks. As Young, Greally and Nugent (2003) suggest, treating the deaf child as 'the same as other children' has the pervasive effect of making problematic what it is to be different. In turn this raises issues such as normalisation, stigma and diversity in society and, in this case, in school.

4.7. Deaf pupils as Deaf pupils: the minority community framework

Within a minority community framework, deaf pupils were seen to be members of a minority culture -the Deaf community. Deaf pupils were understood first and foremost to construct the world visually. Sign language was regarded as the natural language of deaf pupils, through which they could communicate with ease and progressively acquire a Deaf identity. Within this framework deaf children had the potential to achieve as much as they desired in life – and expectations accordingly, were high.

Deaf bilingual-bicultural programmes offered deaf pupils an opportunity to develop as fully as deaf individuals. Deaf assistants and Deaf teachers were key figures in the education of deaf pupils, not only providing culturally Deaf role models (i.e. to develop language and nurture identity), but also in making appropriate decisions about pupils' education, and education policy. Spanish was regarded as a second language after Spanish Sign Language although literacy was nevertheless regarded as an essential skill to deaf pupils. Speech was not discouraged, as it was perceived to be useful in the management of day-to-day life in the hearing world.

Within this philosophy deaf pupils were seen to have the right to be educated in sign language and to learn Spanish as a second language. This would then allow them to participate in two cultures, thus acknowledging the bilingual/bicultural reality of the child.

The minority community framework considered cultural identity and language to be fundamental to the life and education of the child. Although other frameworks considered the role of Deaf language/culture, the minority community considered these of paramount importance. Within this framework Spanish was still valued as a second language for the child.

4.8. The attributional patterns of the four social representations of deaf pupils

The four frameworks presented above (medical, speech-centred, educational and minority community frameworks) illustrate different ways of conceptualising deafness and the deaf pupil. Weiner's (1986) Theory of Causal Attribution (see Section 2.5.2) provides a useful tool with which to examine attribution patterns within different philosophical or theoretical approaches. Thus an analysis of the meanings of deafness within each

framework, with a particular focus on the development of the deaf child, illuminated four distinct attributional patterns.

The causal attribution model identifies three parameters as the basis of description, namely: 'locus of causality', 'stability' and 'controllability'. With respect to the deaf child and his/her development, these are defined as follows:
Locus of causality: the internal and external aspects of the life of the deaf child (i.e. internal – factors intrinsic to deafness itself, *vs.* external - factors associated with the child's environment e.g. school)
Stability: The cause and effects of deafness as either permanent or transitory (i.e. stable *vs.* unstable).
Controllability: The control that deaf children have of the deafness and its effects (i.e. controllable *vs.* uncontrollable).

Examining each framework using these parameters, a picture emerges of the different ways in which deafness, and the development of the deaf child, is understood.

- Within a *medical* framework, deafness is perceived to be primarily a pathology - an internal state, bound up with the individual. The deaf child is seen to have no control over his/her lack of hearing. Within this perspective, opportunities to be 'normal' depend on the restoration of hearing by surgical or external intervention. In general terms however, and certainly without the restoration of hearing, deafness is considered to be irreversible and is therefore associated with limited ability or achievement. In terms of emotional and behavioural effects, deafness is seen to constitute an (internal) source of emotional and behavioural difficulties. The restoration of hearing and maximising the use of residual hearing is viewed as the only means to achieve any kind of normal life.

- Within the *speech-centred* framework, the cause of deafness is considered to be internal to the individual. However, unlike the medical framework, change through speech-therapy offers a realistic opportunity to avoid the more damaging effects of deafness. Although deaf pupils have a permanent and limiting impairment, they can achieve some control over their condition by developing normal speech. However, the potential for deaf pupils to control their lives relies greatly on them receiving intensive speech-therapy.

- In the *educational* framework, deafness is merely a characteristic of deaf pupils. This characteristic can be understood in a negative or more positive light. While deafness itself as a state is irreversible and permanent, the effects of deafness and the *meaning* of the deaf child's experience may be much more positive. Deaf children's control over their deafness is seen to be conditional on receiving quality education. Access to quality education is seen as providing tools with which both to reflect upon their experience and cope in the hearing world.

- Within the *minority community* framework, deafness is seen as a minority cultural experience. Deaf pupils themselves make sense of what it means to be deaf by acknowledging their primarily visual experience of the world and their relationship with the Deaf minority community and culture. Deafness as a cultural experience is outside the real understanding of those who are not deaf. A strong Deaf cultural identity can help deaf pupils confidently challenge hearing society and question established (hearing) standards of normality. However, deafness is constructed by Deaf and hearing people and their interpretations may vary according to their experiences. While the deaf child can have some control as to how he/she wants to interpret the fact of being deaf, the truth is that alternative and contradicting interpretations of deafness will still be fabricated by others over which he/she will have no control.

Table 4. 2: Attributional style

Social Representation	Framework	Attributional style: Deafness is for the deaf pupil
'Deaf pupil as disabled'	Clinical or medical	Internal, stable and uncontrollable,
'Deaf pupil as impaired'	Speech centre/logopaedics	Internal, stable and controllable
'Deaf pupil as any other'	Educational	Internal, unstable and controllable
'Deaf pupil as Deaf'	Minority community	External, unstable and uncontrollable

Using an attribution model, deafness and the development of the deaf child has been considered through the different frameworks – each framework allowing a different representation of the child to emerge. As a general pattern, medical, speech centred and

educational frameworks all construct deafness to be an internal state in the child. Differences emerge between these three frameworks around how deaf children then control the impact that deafness has on their lives, both on themselves and their behaviour and on their achievements in education. The fourth representation, drawn from the cultural framework represents a significantly different approach – one in which being deaf represents another way of life which deaf children may construct for themselves through sign language acquisition and contact with culturally Deaf adults.

4.9. Language and vocabulary used in each social representation

The debate around the education of deaf children, specifically around language used to deliver the curriculum and equip deaf children to enter adulthood, has created deeply divided 'camps' within the Deaf education field. In many ways these 'camps' constitute the social representations outlined above. It is widely thought this has had a detrimental effect on deaf children's social and emotional development (Fjord, 2000). As Fjord (2000) suggests: "the metaphors we use shape the socialisation process and can change the experience of parents and deaf child".

Language is a central aspect to social representations (Moscovici, 1984; Moscovici and Duveen, 2000). With respect to deaf children, and drawing on Fjord's observations, it becomes crucial to consider the role of language as a vehicle in conveying social representations.

Table 4.3 illustrates vocabulary and terms identified in each social representation.

Table 4. 3: Vocabulary used to describe views

Social Representation	Framework	Language/vocabulary used
'Deaf pupil as disabled'	Clinical or medical	Disability
'Deaf pupil as impaired'	Speech centre/logopaedics	Limitation/impairment
'Deaf pupil as any other'	Educational	Need
'Deaf pupil as Deaf'	Minority community	Cultural characteristic

With this in mind, it is evident that the four constructions of deaf pupils use a different language vocabulary to convey images about deafness. The terms and metaphors employed by professionals illustrate the different underlying philosophies.

4.10. Conclusion

By reflecting on the late history of Deaf education in Spain, and analysing in particular the experience of a school and a team of professionals it became clear that different understandings of deaf children were emerging and being presented to professionals working in the field.

Representations of deaf pupils as disabled, impaired, any other pupil and Deaf individuals were present in one or other form in school. These social representations that were emerging from frameworks of understanding –medical, speech-centred, educational and minority community- illustrated particular ways of attributing deafness and its consequences for the child. The patterns that emerged often conveyed contradictory ways of thinking. For instance, there were significant contradictions between medical and minority community frameworks in their interpretations of the deaf pupil.

To understand how teachers might be constructing deaf pupils in the Deaf bilingual-bicultural approach, systematic observation of how teachers deal with the different and at points contradictory representations of deaf pupils that surround them at the school as identified in this study is fundamental. Chapter 5 uses attitude scales to analyse how teachers dealt with issues affecting the deaf child and his/her education that were interpreted within the four frameworks identified in this study.

Chapter 5

Teachers' beliefs and attitudes towards deaf pupils: Study 2

5.1. Introduction

This chapter analyses teachers' attitudes and beliefs towards the four social representations of deaf pupils, namely deaf pupils as 'disabled', 'impaired', 'any other pupil' and 'Deaf' pupil. The chapter is divided in two parts.

In the first part of the study, teachers' responses to the different statements in the scales will be described. The second part of the chapter will be devoted on the one hand to the analysis of teachers' identification with the four social representations and on the other to exploring how teachers combine these four representations when making sense of deaf pupils (see Section 5.4).

This chapter will illustrate not only teachers' beliefs about cultural, psychological and educational topics, but also how teachers often draw on different frameworks to make sense of these issues affecting the life of deaf children.

5.2. Teachers' perspectives: beliefs and attitudes towards deaf pupils

The way in which teachers define their task, how they view their pupils, how they teach and view that teaching, they way they define the good and bad work/pupil, and the way they think of subject content, are all components of what we term "teachers' perspectives" (Wood, 1983). The understanding of teachers' perspectives is vital to the interpretation of teachers' performance in the classroom (Wood, 1983).

Teachers in the study responded to an attitude questionnaire that included 4 different scales. As seen in Section 3.7.2.2, these scales represented different frameworks[1] and social representations identified in study 1 (see Chapter 4 for details):

- The minority community framework- 'Deaf pupil as Deaf'
- The educational framework- 'Deaf pupil as any other'
- The speech-centred framework- 'Deaf pupil as impaired'

[1] This terminology will be consistently used throughout the chapter. Intentionally there is a separation between the representation of the child that may at times coincide with a particular use of language and labels in common talk (i.e. impaired or disabled) and the wider ideological philosophies underpinning such representations.

- And finally, the medical framework- 'Deaf pupil as disabled'

The four images of deaf children conveyed within the different frameworks represent four social representations (Moscovici, 1984), with which teachers identify to some degree, and which to some extent impact on teachers' beliefs (see Section 2.5.1). Teachers' responses to the attitude scales shed some light as to the frameworks within which teachers operate in deaf schools with a bilingual-bicultural approach to understand deaf children. As Wood (1983) suggested, teachers' perspectives are complex realities that need to be understood as dynamic and flexible. Teachers immersed in complicated realities are likely to hold different views at different times and with varying strengths. For this reason, teachers' perspectives should not be understood as something fixed and concrete, but rather drawing on the different frameworks of understanding.

5.3. Teachers' beliefs about education and deaf pupils

In understanding pupils and the educational situation, teachers create what has been described as 'psychopedagogical' thoughts based on cultural, pedagogical and psychological issues (Coll et al, 2000). Results of teachers' perceptions of cultural, pedagogical and psychological issues portrayed on the four scales will be analysed, hereby. Teachers' responses to the scales will be examined as:

- Beliefs about cultural issues
- Beliefs about pedagogical issues
- Beliefs about psychological issues.

Within these three sections, teachers' perceptions on the four frameworks will be presented by grouping the statements of the four scales that refer to the same topic. Tables will provide details of the statements in the questionnaire and will give in brackets the overall frequency counts for all of the teachers in response to these statements[2].

5.3.1. Teachers' beliefs about cultural issues

As seen in Section 2.4.2, teaching and learning processes are influenced by cultural idiosyncrasies of pupils and teachers, as culture mediates the interpersonal and intrapersonal processes involved in learning. Traditionally, mechanisms in this mediation of culture within the Deaf community have

[2] While percentages and frequency counts on teachers' agreement and disagreement with statements have been included in the tables, responses that showed partial agreement and disagreement have been withdrawn for reasons of clarity and synthesis. However, when partial agreement or disagreement is significant it will be clearly indicated in brackets to assist the reader's understanding of the findings.

included sign language, Deaf culture, Deaf adults and social stigma of deafness. These components will be used below to describe teachers' beliefs.

5.3.1.1. Sign Language

As discussed in Section 1.5.2, the use of sign language is one of the fundamental tenets in Deaf bilingual-bicultural education. It is seen as the natural language of deaf pupils and thus the vehicle of Deaf culture and Deaf identity.

Table 5. 1: Percentages rating of agreement/disagreement for statements related to different representations of sign language.

Scale	Statement	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly Disagree/Disagree
Deaf pupil as Deaf	Sign language is the vehicle of a minority culture (S.61).	50 (14)	25 (7)
Deaf pupil as any other	Sign language is an instrument to construct knowledge (S.31).	85.7 (24)	3.6 (1)
Deaf pupil as impaired	Sign language is a tool to support speech development (S.59).	14.3 (4)	50 (14)
Deaf pupil as disabled	Sign language is an obstacle to speech development (S.83).	0 (0)	75 (21)

Most teachers perceived sign language to be an instrument to construct knowledge (see Table 5.1, S.31; 85.7%) and as more useful than any other communication system in which both to construct knowledge and self-expression (see Table 5.2, S. 82; 89.3% agreed with this view).

For most teachers sign language was not perceived to be an obstacle for the development of speech. Only a tiny minority of teachers could see any detrimental effects on language acquisition (see Table 5.2, S. 2; 7.1%).

However there was clearly some ambivalence around identifying sign language as a tool to support speech development. This was illustrated by the fact that only half of respondents disagreed, against a much smaller proportion of teachers who could positively respond (see Table 5.1, S.59; 14.3%).

Nearly three quarters of the teachers (see Table 5.2, S48; 71.4%) resisted seeing sign language as a temporary support for deaf pupils before being substituted by speech. Only one teacher agreed with this idea. Although these results may look quite positive, it is worth noting that in both cases (statement 59 see Table 5.1,

and statement 48 see Table 5.2), a considerable number of teachers felt ambivalent, only stating partial agreement.

Table 5. 2: Percentages rating of agreement/disagreement for statements related to different meanings of Sign language for deaf pupils.

Scale	Statement	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly Disagree/Disagree
Deaf pupil as Deaf	For deaf pupils, sign language is their natural language, which as in other languages has potentialities and limitations (S.14).	78.6 (22)	10.7 (3)
Deaf pupil as any other	For deaf pupils, sign language is more useful than alternative communication systems to construct knowledge and for them to express themselves (S.82).	89.3 (25)	0 (0)
Deaf pupil as impaired	For deaf pupils, sign language can be a temporary support that should be soon substituted with speech (S.48).	3.6 (1)	71.4 (20)
Deaf pupil as disabled	For deaf pupils, sign language is a signed system that, as any other, is initially beneficial, but in the long run hinders language development (S.2).	7.1 (2)	89.2 (25)

There was 'strong' agreement that sign language is the natural language of deaf children (see Table 5.2, S. 14; 78.6%). In turn, half of the teachers agreed or strongly agreed that sign language was the vehicle of a minority culture.

5.3.1.2. Deaf community and Deaf culture

Teachers were asked about their views on the Deaf community and culture and explanations for its emergence. As with other sections, most powerful agreement was found with the educational framework, which constructed the Deaf community as a collection of those who had achieved a D/deaf identity themselves and sense of belonging with one another. In addition, teachers (see Table 5.3, S. 49; 64.3%) agreed that its emergence was the result of a social and cultural phenomenon, based on deaf people's different way of experiencing and constructing life.

Table 5. 3: Percentages rating of agreement/disagreement for statements related to different understanding of the Deaf community.

Scale	Statement	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly Disagree/Disagree
Deaf pupil as Deaf	The emergence of Deaf community and culture is a social and cultural phenomenon as a result of a different life experience shared by a group of people. It entails a particular way of understanding communication, social values, history, folklore... (S.49).	64.3 (18)	3.6 (1)
Deaf pupil as any other	The emergence of Deaf community and culture is the result of a search for identity and feeling of belonging in a group of deaf peers in order to face the world. (S.12).	71.4 (20)	0 (0)
Deaf pupil as impaired	The emergence of Deaf community and culture is a social phenomenon of marginalisation or isolation of a group that share the same personal limitations (lack of speech, lack of literacy skills, lack of studies...) and that consequently leads to deaf people's lack of integration. It is something similar to a ghetto (S.47).	10.7 (3)	46.5 (13)
Deaf pupil as disabled	The emergence of Deaf community and culture is a self-defence reaction towards a world in which, due to their disability, deaf people do not integrate. In some way, the concept of a 'Deaf community' lightens the weight of their disability (S.54).	3.6 (1)	78.6 (22)

It was worth noting that although teachers seemed to understand Deaf community and its culture from a cultural standpoint, results given to statement 47, illustrated how at least in part a significant group of teachers (see Table 5.3, S.47; 42.8% partly agree/partly disagree) found it hard to give up a medicalised view of the Deaf community. Despite showing agreement for developmental and cultural perspectives, as a group teachers maintained some support for traditionally medical perspectives in contemplating the emergence of the Deaf community. While nearly half of the teachers (see Table 5.3, S.47; 46.5%) did not feel that the emergence of the Deaf community should be understood as a social phenomenon of isolation and marginalisation similar to a ghetto, resulting from their lack of integration in society, the other half either partly (42.8%) or completely (10.7%) agreed with this idea.

5.3.1.3. Successful D/deaf adults

Within the literature Deaf bilingual-bicultural schools valued Deaf adults as models for deaf children's development. How teachers understood D/deaf adults' success in adult life was likely to guide teachers' perspectives on Deaf education. Teachers were presented with four different ways in which success in D/deaf adults could be understood (see Table 5.4.).

The majority of teachers (see Table 5.4, S.63; 82.1%) clearly identified linguistic, cognitive and social development rather than speech, as the key elements to D/deaf adults' success integrating into society. However, speech was still awarded importance within the group. Half of teachers either saw to some extent speech as the key element in D/deaf adults' success in hearing society (S.71; 17.9%), or saw speech as partly justifying their integration. Another possible explanation for successful integration was presented; namely that D/deaf people owed successful integration to society's support to 'disabled people' (S. 44). Responses to this question were mixed, with half of the teachers disagreeing and only 10.7% agreeing. In other words, while half of teachers think that D/deaf adults' success is independent of society's support, the other half at least in part believes that social support has played a fundamental role in their success.

Table 5. 4: Percentages rating of agreement/disagreement for statements related to D/deaf adults' success.

Scale	Statement	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly Disagree/Disagree
Deaf pupil as Deaf	Deaf adults who have successfully integrated in society owe their success to their cultural definition: assimilating both cultures or rejecting one of them, developing a cultural identity from where to face the world (S.36).	39.3 (11)	17.9 (5)
Deaf pupil as any other	Deaf adults who have successfully integrated in society owe their success to the development of their linguistic, cognitive, social capabilities, etc... and not to the intelligibility of their speech (S.63).	82.1 (23)	0 (0)
Deaf pupil as impaired	Deaf adults who have successfully integrated in society owe their success to their speech (S.71).	17.9 (5)	50 (14)
Deaf pupil as disabled	Deaf adults who have successfully integrated in society owe their success to the social support that disabled people receive from society (S.44).	10.7 (3)	50 (14)

The further explanation for successful integration was that D/deaf people owed their success to the development of a strong identity, be it Deaf or 'hearing' (see Table 5.4, S. 36). This statement received the most ambivalent support. A minority of teachers did not consider identity definition as responsible for integration. However only over one third of teachers believed that developing an identity was a key to integration.

5.3.1.4. Social stigma

As identified in section 5.3.1.2 there was some support for the notion that Deaf community and culture has emerged as an isolated if not ghettoised minority community. Lane (1993) explores this idea to talk of the social stigma of deafness and the Deaf community. Teachers' views on the social stigma of deafness are presented below - in the first instance, they were asked directly how they accounted for this stigma.

Responses were presented which put the agency for creating social stigma either with the individual or with society. When presented with an explanation which pathologised the deaf person "not making an effort" as the source of stigma (see Table 5.5, S. 3) teachers generally disagreed (78%). However, when focus turned to "deaf people's ability to communicate effectively in society" there was more ambivalence with 32.1% agree/strongly agree and 21.4% disagree/strongly disagree (see Table 5.5, S.46).

Table 5. 5: Percentages rating of agreement/disagreement for statements related to social stigma.

Scale	Statement	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly Disagree/Disagree
Deaf pupil as Deaf	Social stigma of deafness is linked to lack of understanding of Deaf culture and community, as happens with other cultural minority groups (S.29).	46.5 (13)	17.9 (5)
Deaf pupil as any other	Social stigma of deafness is linked to society's general low tolerance towards peoples' differences (S.74).	53.6 (15)	14.3 (4)
Deaf pupil as impaired	Social stigma of deafness is linked to deaf people's abilities to communicate in society (S.46).	32.1 (9)	21.4 (6)
Deaf pupil as disabled	Social stigma of deafness is linked to the fact that deaf people do not make any effort to overcome their disability (S.3).	3.6 (1)	78.5 (22)

When the agency for stigma focused on society, teachers' views were divided. Around half of the group accepted an explanation based on society's intolerance in general (see Table 5.5, S.74; 53%) and half that this attitude could be seen in the treatment of other minority communities (see Table 5.5, S.29; 46.5%).

Teachers were not very clear about what did stigmatise deaf people in society (see Table 5.5). It seemed that, for these teachers, there is not simple explanation for this issue and many aspects may be partly responsible for it. A large number of teachers (S.3; 78.6%) opposed the idea that stigma related to deafness was born from the lack of efforts that deaf people made to integrate in society. Half of the teachers explained social stigma towards deafness as a result of society's lack of tolerance towards individuals' differences (S.74; 53.6%) and to the lack of understanding of Deaf community and culture in society as it also happens with other minority groups (S.29; 46.5%). Other possible causes that teachers considered in explaining this phenomenon were deaf people's abilities to communicate effectively in society. As it can be seen in Table 5.5 some teachers did not agree with this point of view or considered it as a partial explanation of the problem.

5.3.2. Teachers' beliefs about pedagogical issues

Another element likely to influence teachers' perspectives are their views on issues related to education. This section analyses teachers' perspectives on deaf pupils' education, drawing on different variables: the major contribution of primary education to deaf pupils' future lives; the nature of education support issues related to the curriculum; teachers' expectations of educational outcome; teachers' work; finally, teachers' relationships with deaf pupils. Each will be examined in turn.

5.3.2.1. Primary education and future outcome

In putting education in a longer-term perspective, teachers were asked to consider their priorities for the future of their pupils. Statements presented to them included concerns around speech, around socio-cultural development and around overall development.

Table 5. 6:Percentages rating of agreement/disagreement for statements related to teachers concerns after school.

Scale	Statement	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly Disagree/Disagree
Deaf pupil as Deaf	When deaf pupils leave school I'm most concerned by the development of their identity and other socio-cultural elements related to it, necessary to live satisfactorily in a multicultural society (S.41).	28.6 (8)	3.6 (1)
Deaf pupil as any other	When deaf pupils leave school I'm most concerned by their general development (cognitive, social, linguistic, etc...) (S.69).	75 (21)	3.6 (1)
Deaf pupil as impaired	When deaf pupils leave school I'm more concerned by their speech, than by the stage of development of their social skills (S.17).	10.7 (3)	60.7 (17)
Deaf pupil as disabled	When deaf pupils leave school I'm most concerned by the level of their speech (S.60).	14.2 (4)	42.8 (12)

The strongest pattern in responses was in expressing concern for "overall development" (see Table 5.6, S. 69; 75%). When overall development was broken into different elements teachers showed relatively low concern for socio-cultural outcome with only just over a quarter of teachers identifying with this aspect. When speech alone was considered 42% of teachers could not rank speech as a key concern and when asked if speech was ranked higher than social skills (S. 60), again a high proportion 60.7% could not agree (S. 17). From this outcome it becomes clear that speech constitutes a relatively low concern over concerns about more holistic development i.e. cognitive, social, etc.

5.3.2.2. Support and success in the education of deaf pupils

Teachers were asked their views on the nature of effective educational support and to explore further this area they were asked what changes would they would make if they had a chance in the education provision for deaf children. In the first instance, the overwhelming response from teachers was agreement that a bilingual-bicultural programme would provide the opportunities for success of deaf pupils (see Table 5.7, S. 20; 92.9%). In support for this, for all but one teacher the key change in the education of deaf pupils consisted in introducing bilingual-bicultural projects, with a Deaf and hearing directing team and teaching staff, competent in the natural culture of Deaf people (S. 37; 96.5%).

In further exploring how teachers perceived educational support a contrast was made between the use of signed Spanish and cued-speech and bilingual-bicultural programmes facilitated by Deaf staff. In this respect, a large proportion of teachers (see Table 5.7, S. 40; 60.7%) still considered the provision of cued-speech and signed Spanish as a requisite for deaf pupils' success. The vast majority of teachers still maintained that the most important change would be to employ fully trained Deaf and hearing professionals in deaf schools (see Table 5.8, S. 56; 89.3%).

Table 5. 7:Percentages rating of agreement/disagreement for statements related to success in deaf pupils' schooling.

Scale	Statement	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly Disagree/Disagree
Deaf pupil as Deaf	Success in schooling deaf pupils is due to deaf and hearing teachers having a bicultural perspective of deaf pupils' education (S.20).	92.9 (26)	0 (0)
Deaf pupil as any other	Success in schooling deaf pupils is due to support teachers specialised in alternative communication systems such as signed Spanish or cued-speech (S.40).	60.7 (17)	7.1 (2)
Deaf pupil as impaired	Success in schooling deaf pupils is due to speech therapy work (S.65).	7.1 (2)	67.8 (19)
Deaf pupil as disabled	Success in schooling deaf pupils is due to the use of CI, hearing aids... (S.73).	14.2 (4)	42.8 (12)

Teachers were asked their views on aids to speech such as CI and speech therapy and their role in supporting deaf pupils. As seen in Section 5.3.2.1, speech was revealed to be a lesser concern to teachers. In support of this half of teachers failed to see the reintroduction of speech therapy as contributing to an improvement in Deaf education. With this in mind, while over two thirds of the teachers (see Table 5.7, S. 65; 67.8%) agreed that speech therapy was not the reason why deaf pupils succeeded in school, a quarter of the group perceived this rehabilitative practice to be only part of the root to successful schooling for the deaf child. Following this trend, nearly a quarter of the teachers (see Table 5.8, S. 5; 21.5%) suggested that reintroducing speech therapy would need to take place if Deaf education was to improve. When asked about CI the majority of teachers did not see it as a key change in improving Deaf education, however half of them considered these devices as responsible for deaf children's success in school at

least in part (see Table 5.7, S. 73; Strongly agree/ agree, 14.2% and Partly agree/disagree 43%).

Table 5. 8: Percentages rating of agreement/disagreement for statements related to key changes in the education of deaf pupils.

Scale	Statement	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly Disagree/Disagree
Deaf pupil as Deaf	If I had to introduce a change to achieve greater success in the education of deaf pupils, it would be: to introduce bilingual-bicultural projects involving deaf and hearing staff, skilled in the culture of deaf people led by governors incorporating deaf as well as hearing professionals (S.37).	96.5 (27)	0 (0)
Deaf pupil as any other	If I had to introduce a change to achieve greater success in the education of deaf pupils, it would be: to use a greater number of deaf and hearing professionals trained to adapt to pupils' needs (S.56).	89.3 (25)	3.6 (1)
Deaf pupil as impaired	If I had to introduce a change to achieve greater success in the education of deaf pupils, it would be: to go back to spending more time on speech training and individual support (S.5).	21.5 (6)	42.8 (12)
Deaf pupil as disabled	If I had to introduce a change to achieve greater success in the education of deaf pupils, it would be: to give all deaf children a CI and mainstream them from an early age with appropriate time spent on speech training (S.90).	3.6 (1)	85.7 (24)

As seen in this section, teachers in the study seemed to be committed to Deaf bilingual-bicultural programmes. Teachers trusted this educational philosophy, and believed that this was the most adequate for deaf pupils. At the same time, for a group of teachers speech was an ability that should be encouraged in the Deaf bilingual-bicultural school, as it is seen to contribute to pupils' success in education. Teachers' views are in accordance with bilingual perspectives, where both the minority –sign language- and majority languages –spoken/written Spanish- are seen as cultural heritage of the deaf pupil (See Section 1.5.2). Teachers' reliance on hearing aids and other instruments to enhance pupils' residual hearing, as a way of developing spoken language in the deaf child brought up a challenging reality in Deaf bilingual-bicultural education. On one hand teachers work out a cultural construction of the child and acknowledge their

belonging to a cultural minority group; on the other, teachers work with the child to develop the majority's language relying on the use of residual hearing in the deaf child which promotes medicalised constructions of the child.

5.3.2.3. Curriculum for deaf pupils

Teachers were asked to reflect on the different curricular options that could meet deaf children in school- to do so they were presented with different alternatives.

Clearly, teachers expressed some hesitations in identifying curricula that they believed could potentially put deaf children at a disadvantage. The vast majority of teachers did not regard simplified versions of the standard curriculum as an adequate curricular option (see Table 5.9, S. 55; 82.1%). In a similar vein, programmes used in special education schools (see Table 5.10, S. 26; 75%) and shorter versions of the mainstream curriculum were not believed to be a satisfactory schooling option for deaf pupils (see Table 5.10, S. 53; 67.9%).

Table 5. 9: Percentages rating of agreement/disagreement for statements related to deaf pupils' schooling.

Scale	Statement	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly Disagree/Disagree
Deaf pupil as Deaf	Deaf pupils should be schooled in schools with bicultural programmes (S.88).	85.7 (24)	3.6 (1)
Deaf pupil as disabled	Deaf pupils should be schooled in schools with reduced educational programmes (S.55).	7.1 (2)	82.1 (23)

Teachers agreed that bilingual-bicultural curricula were the best option for deaf pupils (see Table 5.9, S. 88; 87.6%), and as seen in the previous section (see Section 5.3.2.2) this was considered by the vast majority of teachers to be the key change in Deaf education (S. 37; 96.5%). However, when a Deaf-led educational provision was presented to the teachers only a minority believed that this was the best way of responding to deaf pupils' educational needs (see Table 5.10, S. 7; 14.2%).

Table 5. 10:Percentages rating of agreement/disagreement for statements related to educational projects for deaf pupils.

Scale	Statement	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly Disagree/Disagree
Deaf pupil as Deaf	The educational projects of the schools with deaf pupils should be designed mainly by deaf people considering the educational needs of their cultural community and including the curriculum of the wider community (hearing) (S.7).	14.2 (4)	25 (7)
Deaf pupil as any other	The educational projects of the schools with deaf pupils should be the same as those of hearing pupils of the same age (S.80).	67.8 (19)	7.2 (2)
Deaf pupil as impaired	The educational projects of the schools with deaf pupils should follow the same curriculum as those used for hearing children, yet pursuing a limited number of goals (S.53).	7.1 (2)	67.9 (19)
Deaf pupil as disabled	The educational projects of the schools with deaf pupils should be based in special education schools' programmes, where the objectives are already adapted to the pupils' limitations (S.26).	14.3 (4)	75 (21)

It is perhaps initially puzzling that the majority of teachers also advocated mainstream curricula for deaf children (see Table 5.10, S. 80; 67.8%). This may perhaps be seen in the context that within the education system the two are not mutually exclusive. Teachers in the focus group study described ideally delivering the mainstreamed-national curricula using a bilingual-bicultural methodology (See Section 6.4).

5.3.2.4. Teachers' attributions of educational outcome

In order to explore teachers' explanations for deaf pupils' outcome four alternative explanations were presented. Two explanations considered deaf pupils' outcome by drawing on the child's deafness, the other two related outcome to educational provision. Results suggest that teachers were inclined to consider deaf pupils' outcome as related to the educational provision in preference to effects of deafness in the child. Linking pupils' performance to the educational response, it was observed that the majority of teachers (see Table 5.11, S. 10; 89.3%) also agreed that pupils' performance at school could improve if teachers had more knowledge about learning processes in deaf children. In

addition, for a relatively large group of teachers the lack of consideration given to cultural issues affecting the deaf child (i.e. 'natural' language...) within educational programmes, explained educational outcome in children (S. 22; 64.3%).

Table 5. 11:Percentages rating of agreement/disagreement for statements related to educational outcome of deaf pupils.

Scale	Statement	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly Disagree/Disagree
Deaf pupil as Deaf	The main cause for the educational outcome of deaf pupils is that programmes do not adapt to the cultural needs of the pupils and basic aspects, such as the use of their natural language to access the curriculum, are not taken into account (S.22).	64.3 (18)	10.7 (3)
Deaf pupil as any other	The professionals that work in schools for the deaf need more training, if the outcome of their pupils is to improve (S.10).	89.3 (25)	3.6 (1)
Deaf pupil as impaired	The main cause for the educational outcome of deaf pupils is that deaf pupils take a very long time to cope with speech, despite the support we may give (S.62).	32.2 (9)	14.2 (4)
Deaf pupil as disabled	The main cause for the educational outcome of deaf pupils is that their disability has irreversible consequences in all aspects of pupils' developments (S.77).	7.2 (2)	67.8 (19)

In exploring teachers' expectations of educational outcome from another perspective, teachers were presented with explanations which relied on a 'pathologised' view of the child- that is, a view that attributes success or failure to the child rather than to the system. Over two thirds of teachers believed that pupils' deafness was not the main factor affecting pupils' educational outcome (see Table 5.11, S. 77; 67.9%). Furthermore, only a minority of teachers identified deaf pupils' difficulties to develop speech as directly responsible for their performance at school (see Table 5.11, S. 62; 32.2%). Although at first sight teachers' responses to statement 62 (see Table 5.11.) were in line with what has been described in previous sections (see Section 5.3.2.1 and 5.3.2.2) this view represents a departure from what might be expected.

Despite the fact that for two thirds of teachers speech was not perceived to be the explanation for deaf pupils' success in education (see Section 5.3.2.2) and for

nearly half of teachers speech was not their main concern (see Section 5.3.2.1), in attributing a cause for educational outcome only 14.2% (S.62, see Table 5.11) discarded pupils' speech abilities as the main reason. In other words, although teachers initially did not identify with the importance of speech, they were hesitant in looking for explanations about outcome that did not include speech. In reflecting about this data we can say that, for teachers that do not regard speech development as an essential part of Deaf education, there are very few teachers (14.2%) that are determined to look elsewhere to find reasons for pupils' achievement. Therefore, we may conclude that teachers show some ambivalence in the role speech plays. It is likely that this belief will have implications as to how they construct their role as teachers.

This inconsistency might be indicating the relationships that teachers establish between outcome and literacy and the crucial role that teachers might be perceiving in the development of literacy process. However, this is a tentative interpretation as there is no conclusive data to support it.

5.3.2.6. Teachers' role

Four statements explained the challenging nature of educating deaf children. Catering for pupils' individual needs at school was identified by nearly two thirds of teachers as a challenging aspect of their work (see Table 5.12, S. 33; 64.3%). When the source of strain was presented as being within the child, over half of teachers saw pupils' lack of hearing as an added strain (see Table 5.12, S. 18; 53.6%) and when the sources of strain was presented as being linked to the time and care needed to educate a disabled child most teachers remained indecisive (see Table 5.12, S. 72; 28.6% agreed and 20.8% disagreed). Finally, nearly half of teachers rejected cultural differences between teachers and pupils as being a challenge to their performance in educating deaf pupils (S. 57; S.46.4%).

Table 5. 12: Percentages rating of agreement/disagreement for statements related to teacher's role.

Scale	Statement	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly Disagree/Disagree
Deaf pupil as Deaf	Educating deaf pupils is hard work because there is a difference in the culture of deaf pupils and their teachers that challenges the teaching process (S.57).	14.3 (4)	46.4 (13)
Deaf pupil as any other	Educating deaf pupils is hard work because all children are different and you need to spot individual needs of all your pupils (S.33).	64.3 (18)	0 (0)
Deaf pupil as impaired	Educating deaf pupils is hard work because their lack of hearing is an added problem to the already complex development of children (S.18).	53.6 (15)	14.3 (4)
Deaf pupil as disabled	Educating deaf pupils is hard work because deaf pupils' disability requires more time, attention, and care from teachers (S.72).	28.6 (8)	20.8 (6)

In this respect, teachers understood the challenging nature of their work to be the result of providing an individualised curriculum to meet pupils' needs. Teachers did attribute pupils' lack of hearing as a obstacle for fulfilling their professional role and for this reason it was likely to influence their way of thinking about the child. In contrast, cultural difference between teachers and pupils were not seen to interfere with teachers' work.

5.3.2.5. Teacher-pupil relationship

The relationship between teachers and pupils is clearly fundamental to education and also to the construction of self (see Section 2.5.3). With this in mind, four different interpretations of this relationship were offered to teachers in order to explore which element of the relationship was predominant in teachers' minds. Three statements portrayed limitations in the relationship as a result of inadequacies in the child, namely, their deafness/disability, their lack of lip-reading skills and a general delayed development. Of these factors, children's lack of ability to communicate orally seemed to be the most detrimental to the relationship between teachers and deaf pupils (see Table 5.13, S. 8; 57.1% and S. 75; 71.4%).

Table 5. 13: Percentages rating of agreement/disagreement for statements related to teacher-pupil relationship.

Scale	Statement	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly Disagree/Disagree
Deaf pupil as Deaf	The relationship established with deaf pupils is partly different from the one you establish with other pupils because it is also a cultural encounter between deaf pupil and hearing teachers, guided by different values and rules (S.33).	17.9 (5)	32.2 (9)
Deaf pupil as any other	The relationship established with deaf pupils is in part different from the one you establish with other pupils because they show more immature attitudes for a longer period of time (S.51).	7.1 (2)	53.6 (15)
Deaf pupil as impaired	The relationship established with deaf pupils is in part different from the one you establish with other pupils because their lip-reading skills are not good and this hinders communication (S.8).	57.1 (16)	10.7 (3)
Deaf pupil as disabled	The relationship established with deaf pupils is in part different from the one you establish with other pupils because their disability prevents them from developing effective and rich language to communicate and that is a handicap in relating to others (S.75).	71.4 (20)	0 (0)

In terms of general developmental delay over half of teachers did not identify this as influencing the relationship in any significant way (see Table 5.13, S. 51; 53.6%). Nearly a third of teachers disagreed that the relationship relied on an acceptance of cultural difference (see Table 5.13, S. 33; 32.2%). In general, relationship between teachers and pupils was more likely to be associated with communication barriers than with cultural difference.

5.3.3. Teachers' beliefs about psychological issues

The final element considered in the analysis of teachers' views was the way they understood the deaf child's social-emotional development. Teachers' expectations for three areas of pupils' development in school were explored: overall potential; overall emotional development; and pupils' behaviour. The following section presents teachers' expectation on these areas.

5.3.3.1. Teachers' beliefs about deaf pupils' potential

Teachers were presented with four alternative explanations of pupils' development. Two statements presented variables related to deaf pupils as individuals. Two further variables presented deafness and speech as limiting pupils' potential development in life.

All teachers indicated a belief that deaf pupils' development in future life was influenced by their own will and nature as individuals. The majority of teachers believed that deaf pupils could achieve in life as any individual (see Table 5.14, S. 86; 64.2%). In addition to this, more than half of the teachers saw deaf pupils' will as important in determining how far they would get in life (see Table 5.14, S. 27; 53.6%).

Table 5. 14: Percentages rating of agreement/disagreement for statements related to teachers' expectations about deaf pupils' future life.

Scale	Statement	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly Disagree/Disagree
Deaf pupil as Deaf	Deaf pupils can get as far in life as they wish (S.27).	53.6 (15)	0 (0)
Deaf pupil as any other	Deaf pupils can get as far in life as any other person (S.86).	64.2 (18)	0 (0)
Deaf pupil as impaired	Deaf pupils can get as far in life as their speech abilities will take them (S.6).	14.2 (4)	25 (7)
Deaf pupil as disabled	Deaf pupils can get as far in life as their disability will allow (S.50).	28.5 (8)	39.3 (11)

However, when exploring the impact of deafness on determining pupils' achievement in life, teachers showed some hesitations. Just over a third did not see deafness as limiting what deaf pupils could achieve in life (see Table 5.14, S. 50; 39.3%). In contrast, speech emerged as a much stronger variable than deafness itself in influencing pupils' life attainments- just a quarter of teachers did not see pupils' speech as limiting their future success. These results show an apparent contradiction with teachers beliefs about the education of deaf pupils, as for at least half of teachers speech development did not constitute a cause for concern once pupils had left school (see Section 5.3.2.1). Clearly, in the eyes of most of these teachers, deafness and its impact in speech development suggests a threat for the deaf pupils' attainments in life. This trend in teacher belief seems to

be consistent with teachers' belief regarding the role of speech in deaf pupils academic outcome presented in Section 5.3.2.4.

5.3.3.2. Deaf children's social and emotional development

In reflecting on deaf pupils' social and emotional development in school, four key elements were explored: Pupils' identity development; deaf adults' contribution to pupils socio-emotional development; hearing teachers' role in deaf pupils' development of a sense of self; and deaf pupils' friendships.

Four possible causes were offered to explain deaf pupils' successful identity development. Two were based on incorporating disability into their identity; the other two focused on developing a personal identity based on their strengths as individuals regardless of their hearing status.

The majority of teachers -over three quarters- believed that deaf pupils' development of identity incorporated all areas of development (social, linguistic, and cognitive) (see Table 5.15, S. 23; 78.6%) and a large proportion extended this 'holistic' view to incorporate contact with the Deaf community (see Table 5.15, S. 4; 71.4%). Speech development in isolation was not regarded as a significant impact on identity development for the vast majority (see Table 5.15, S. 84; 85.7%).

In considering whether deaf pupils needed to accept their deafness as a disability in order to successfully construct their identity, teachers showed some hesitation. Just over one third of teachers believed that deaf pupils' acceptance of deafness as a disability, had nothing to do with developing a successful identity (see Table 5.15, S. 34; 35.7%). For almost two thirds of teachers, deafness where perceived to be a disabling condition was thought likely to impact, at least in part, on their identity.

Table 5. 15: Percentages rating of agreement/disagreement for statements related to teachers' expectations about deaf pupils' identity development.

Scale	Statement	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly Disagree/Disagree
Deaf pupil as Deaf	Identity development in the deaf pupil will be more or less satisfactory depending on the contact that he/she will establish with the Deaf community with whom he/she share a language, values, history... a shared experience of life (S.4).	71.4 (20)	3.6 (1)
Deaf pupil as any other	Identity development in the deaf pupil will be more or less satisfactory depending on the development of social, personal and cognitive skills as a result of an adequate social process (S.23).	78.6 (22)	3.6 (1)
Deaf pupil as impaired	Identity development in the deaf pupil will be more or less satisfactory depending on the level of speech that he/she will be able to develop to be accepted in society (S.84).	3.6 (1)	85.5 (24)
Deaf pupil as disabled	Identity development in the deaf pupil will be more or less satisfactory depending on the degree of understanding and acceptance of his/her disability and his/her ability to communicate through speech in society (S.34).	14.1 (4)	35.7 (10)

Having considered factors impacting on the individual child's emotional development, teachers were then asked to consider the systems within which the deaf child is located namely the Deaf and hearing communities in school. Four statements therefore highlighted different ways in which Deaf adult role models might contribute to deaf pupils' formation of self-concept. Of these four statements, two proposed Deaf adults as an example of the 'hardship' of deafness, the other two statements presented Deaf adults as inspiring role-models.

For nearly all teachers, Deaf adults offered deaf pupils an adult role model with whom they could identify fully (see Table 5.16, S. 43; 92.8%) and through whom pupils would come closer to a culturally Deaf way of understanding life (see Table 5.16, S. 16; 96.5%). In addition, more than half of teachers believed that contact with Deaf adults was beneficial in understanding the consequences of their disability (see Table 5.16, S. 75; 53.5%). These findings agree with teachers' inclination to see pupils' 'disability' as a variable of their emerging identity (S. 34).

Table 5. 16: Percentages rating of agreement/disagreement for statements related to teachers' expectations about deaf pupils' relationships with deaf adults.

Scale	Statement	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly Disagree/Disagree
Deaf pupil as Deaf	The relationship that deaf pupils establish with deaf adults is necessary because they facilitate identification processes, opening doors to a cultural community with its own values, history, art... (S.16).	96.5 (27)	3.6 (1)
Deaf pupil as any other	The relationship that deaf pupils establish with deaf adults offers them adult role models who live with hearing people, have a career, a family, etc... It gives them an idea of how the life of a deaf adult is (S.43).	92.8 (26)	3.6 (1)
Deaf pupil as impaired	The relationship that deaf pupils establish with deaf adults helps them understand the importance of speech in adult life (S.51).	21.4 (6)	50 (14)
Deaf pupil as disabled	The relationship that deaf pupils establish with deaf adults helps them understand better the consequences of their disability (S.75).	53.5 (15)	10.7 (3)

In turn, deaf pupils' relationships with hearing adults at school were considered. Perceived benefits of contact with hearing adults were formulated in four different ways. Statements stressed on the one hand, how contact with hearing adults represented an opportunity to discover a different culture, and on the other hand, deaf pupils' deviation from hearing norms.

There was substantial agreement that hearing teachers brought to deaf children representations of hearing culture, which has significant value for the deaf child. Patterns emerged in a degree in which this situation represented a mechanism of assimilation or a demonstration of difference. With this in mind, nearly all teachers (see Table 5.17, S. 87; 89.%) agreed that hearing professionals offered deaf pupils a different cultural framework and that this significantly widened pupils' understanding of the world around them.

Table 5. 17: Percentages rating of agreement/disagreement for statements related to teachers' expectations deaf pupils' relationships with hearing adults.

Scale	Statement	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly Disagree/Disagree
Deaf pupil as Deaf	The relationship that deaf pupils establish with hearing adults is positive, because from hearing adults they learn their second language, the social customs, the culture of the majority society and they can compare with their own norms and values of their community (S.87).	89.3 (25)	0 (0)
Deaf pupil as any other	The relationship that deaf pupils establish with hearing adults is fruitful as they acquire skills to integrate in society (S.32).	75 (21)	0 (0)
Deaf pupil as impaired	The relationship that deaf pupils establish with hearing adults is positive, because we live in a hearing society. Contact with hearing people gives them more opportunities of overcoming their problems of speech acquisition and improving their lip-reading (S.25).	32.2 (9)	10.7 (3)
Deaf pupil as disabled	The relationship that deaf pupils establish with hearing adults is positive, because it is the only way for them to accept their problem and integrate in society. Surrounding them with deaf people is a deception to protect them from their disability (S.67).	7.1 (2)	64.3 (18)

In support of this approach and in seeing deafness as a positive cultural experience, teachers did not see contact with hearing adults as a strategy to make pupils aware of their disability (see Table 5.17, S. 67; 65%). Teachers possibly simultaneously working within different frameworks of understanding also agreed with statements which saw deafness in a positive light. Respondents identified with perspectives in which interpersonal relationships between hearing teachers and the child were seen to be a means to assimilating deaf children into hearing culture. Three quarters of teachers perceived hearing relationships to be an opportunity for deaf pupils to acquire skills and behaviours that would lead to a positive integration in hearing society (see Table 5.17, S. 32; 75%). Although some statements suggested assimilationist perspectives, when presented with *explicit* assimilationist views, teachers were reluctant to agree. High hesitancy was observed in teachers' responses when integration in hearing society was portrayed with strong assimilationist overtones. Only a third of teachers agreed

that they offered deaf pupils the key to forming part of society, namely, speech (see Table 5.17, S. 25; 32.2%, with 10.7% explicitly disagreeing with this idea). The majority of teachers remained unclear about their beliefs with respect to this issue (S. 25; 57.1% partial agreement/disagreement).

In exploring deaf pupils' social relationships with deaf peers, four different interpretations were offered as to why deaf pupils' preferred to socialise with other deaf pupils. Two statements portrayed deaf pupils' preference for deaf peers to be a result of their handicap and limitations on their ability to socialise with hearing peers. The other two statements explained deaf pupils' preference in terms of the cultural and social opportunities deaf peers offered them.

Table 5. 18: Percentages rating of agreement/disagreement for statements related to deaf pupils' friendship.

Scale	Statement	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly Disagree/Disagree
Deaf pupil as Deaf	Deaf pupils prefer deaf friends rather than hearing ones because there is a significant cultural difference (language, interaction…) (S.35).	46.4 (13)	21.4 (6)
Deaf pupil as any other	Deaf pupils prefer to be with deaf friends. This is a sheer fact of social development: they improve their social skills and build on self-confidence (S.19).	53.5 (15)	21.4 (6)
Deaf pupil as impaired	Deaf pupils prefer deaf friends over hearing because they'd rather be isolated, than make the effort of making themselves understood (S.79).	0 (0)	82 (23)
Deaf pupil as disabled	Deaf pupils prefer deaf friends because they are very closed up. They are very lazy, they don't want to make any effort. We can't ignore that deaf people have serious social handicaps (S.52).	0 (0)	85.7 (24)

Most teachers could not identify with explanations that suggested that deaf children were choosing to isolate and alienate themselves by associating only with other deaf children (see Table 5.18, S. 79; 82% and S. 52; 85.7%). Preference for deaf peers was seen by over half of the teachers as resulting from an opportunity to feel confident and develop their social skills with other deaf children (see Table 5.18, S. 19; 53.5%). A similar proportion of teachers agreed that children preferred to associate with children from the same cultural group (see Table 5.18, S. 35; 46.4%). When offered a negative interpretation, teachers

showed strong disagreement. Perhaps surprisingly, however, teachers were more cautious in their support for more positive interpretations.

5.3.3.4. Expectations about deaf pupils' emotional-behavioural development

This section will present replies to statements that explored teachers' beliefs about behaviour; and explanations for pupils' unhappiness in the school. These will be analysed, in turn.

As reviewed in the literature, deaf children are often described as more aggressive than hearing children (Marschark, 1993). Deaf pupils' behaviour was compared with that of hearing peers in four statements. Most teachers perceived deaf pupils to be as aggressive as other pupils of their same age (see Table 5.19, S. 15; 71.4%). Deafness was not seen as the cause of aggression (see Table 5.19, S. 39; 71.4% and see Table 5.20, S. 9; 75%). Rather, stressful circumstances surrounding deaf children's life were considered by a relatively large groups of teachers to be at least in part responsible deaf children's aggressive behaviour (see Table 5.19, S. 76; 50% and see Table 5.20, S. 85; 53.6%). Clearly, a similar pattern emerges when deaf pupils' aggressive behaviour is explained as a result of the frustrating experience of being deaf in hearing oriented society that does not meet their needs- teachers show ambivalence. In contrast, when explaining unhappiness and lack of motivation, more than two thirds acknowledge the school's responsibility in providing adequate responses to the child. It is difficult to interpret this apparent contradiction. However, it is likely that teachers contemplate fights as closely linked to peer clashes rather than as a way to 'steam off' their stress and unhappiness.

Table 5. 19: Percentages rating of agreement/disagreement for statements related to teachers' expectations about deaf pupils' behaviour.

Scale	Statement	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly Disagree/Disagree
Deaf pupil as Deaf	I do not think that deaf pupils are more aggressive than their hearing peers, but it is true that the circumstances in which they are living may trigger, at times, more aggressive reactions (S.76).	39.3 (11)	10.7 (3)
Deaf pupil as any other	Deaf pupils are as aggressive as other hearing pupils of the same age (S.15).	71.4 (20)	0 (0)
Deaf pupil as impaired	Deaf pupils are more aggressive than other pupils (S.30).	3.6 (1)	60.7 (17)
Deaf pupil as disabled	Deaf pupils, as a result of their disability, have more difficulties controlling themselves and this makes them more aggressive than other children (S.39).	10.7 (3)	71.4 (20)

Table 5. 20: Percentages rating of agreement/disagreement for teacher's understanding of pupil's behaviour.

Scale	Statement	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly Disagree/Disagree
Deaf pupil as Deaf	Occasionally, some deaf pupils get involved in fights because their school experience is very frustrating. Fights are not provoked by deafness, but by being deaf in a hearing society that doesn't meet pupils' needs (S.85).	25 (7)	28.6 (8)
Deaf pupil as any other	Some deaf pupils get involved in fights. It seems that this is related to the development self-control and conflict resolution skills. In other words, due to their social skills and not to being deaf (S.70).	53.6 (15)	0 (0)
Deaf pupil as impaired	Occasionally, some deaf pupils get involved in fights because deafness provokes less self-control... this is an example in which you can see the difference between deaf and hearing children (S.24).	10.7 (3)	53.6 (15)
Deaf pupil as disabled	Occasionally, some deaf pupils get involved in fights because their deafness makes them more aggressive. This is part of the disability (S.9).	3.6 (1)	75 (21)

Overall, teachers' answers reported that most teachers in the study did not expect aggressive behaviour from deaf children.

Teachers were asked to consider deaf pupils' sense of emotional well-being, particularly their lack of motivation and low mood. A considerable number of teachers believed to varying degrees that the emotional development of deaf pupils could not be ignored. When lack of motivation and unhappiness in deaf pupils was presented as an ordinary developmental state common to all children and therefore not a serious concern, teachers were ambivalent. There was some support for the idea that low mood was linked to natural developmental stages, however only a quarter of teachers strongly agreed with this statement (see 5.21, S. 21; 25%). In general, most teachers were open to considering pupils' emotional well-being in the context of school life, and most identified with explanations that were external to the child. As we can see below, statements which sought to locate the source of the problem within the child, received less support. Half of the teachers disagreed that lack of motivation in deaf pupils could be explained by pupils' realisation of their limitations (see 5.21, S. 78; 50%) or the expectation that adults resolve their challenges for them (see 5.21, S. 11; 57.9%). Clearly, when teachers were given the opportunity to overpathologise the child, most teachers did not show this inclination.

Table 5. 21: Percentages rating of agreement/disagreement for statements related to pupils moods.

Scale	Statement	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly Disagree/Disagree
Deaf pupil as Deaf	Often some deaf pupils show lack of motivation. This is because the school does not understand the needs of these pupils and when they do, the school has no resources to meet pupils' needs. Thus, pupils feel uneasy (S.68).	67.9 (19)	10.7 (3)
Deaf pupil as any other	Sometimes some deaf pupils feel down and show lack of motivation. This should not be a big concern as all pupils go through similar emotional states (S.21).	25 (7)	32.2 (9)
Deaf pupil as impaired	Often some deaf pupils show lack of motivation. This is because they realise that they are not getting anywhere. There is just a time when they acknowledge their 'difference' (S.78).	14.3 (4)	50 (14)
Deaf pupil as disabled	Often some deaf pupils show lack of motivation. This is because they give in too fast. Both at home and at school they get used to external support. It is a shame; with the little they can learn (S.11).	3.6 (1)	57.2 (16)

A large proportion of teachers perceived this lack of motivation as resulting from the ineffectiveness of education in meeting deaf pupils' emotional needs (see Table 5.21, S. 68; 69.9%).

5.3.4. Overview of teachers' beliefs about deaf pupils and their education

Summaries of teachers' beliefs will be presented below and we will present perspectives on cultural, pedagogical and psychological issues.

When considering cultural issues, teachers mainly worked within educational frameworks. Beliefs about the cultural needs of the child fell into an holistic concern for deaf pupils' development, that is, it was thought important to teachers that deaf pupils had access to sign language and shared an identity with their peers. Considerations of cultural issues did not preclude concerns around speech. Within an educational framework, speech also was given prominence, for example, in predicting future success in adult life. Despite teachers' affiliation with bilingual-bicultural programmes, their understanding of cultural issues and their influence on

the child's development, were not necessarily constructed from a minority community framework.

With regards to pedagogical issues teachers seemed to draw mainly from educational and minority community frameworks to create an understanding of deaf pupils' education. However, more than any other area, when considering pedagogical issues teachers drew significantly on speech-centred and medical frameworks in order to represent their perspectives. This was illustrated in teachers' responses to challenging situations in the classroom. In these instances children's lack of hearing and speech was given as the explanation for obstacles in both achieving a healthy teacher-pupil relationship and delivering the curriculum. It is of significance that in order to resolve conflicts in educational practice teachers drew on speech-centred frameworks, rather than on minority community ones. This will be examined in greater detail in Chapter 8.

When addressing psychological issues for deaf children, teachers were most comfortable operating within educational and minority community frameworks. Concerns around speech were raised again, in relation to concerns about the future. One area in which teachers were less ambivalent was in their thinking about professionals' roles in schools. Teachers were confident drawing from minority community frameworks when thinking about Deaf staff and speech-centred frameworks when understanding the role as hearing professionals. Finally, in understanding deaf children's emotional and behaviour experiences teachers remained open to the emotional impact of school experiences. They avoided the potential to over pathologise children presented in medical and speech-centred frameworks; preferring to see children's behaviour as a normal response to frustrations in school as proposed within a minority community framework.

In summary, teachers rely basically on developmental and culturally Deaf representations of their pupils. However, at various points teachers are likely to draw attention to speech and hearing abilities in the child as sources of limitations within the child for current education and future achievement. This pattern seems to indicate that medical frameworks are evident in education and few teachers used them to understand the child, preferring a more 'benevolent' interpretation of deafness. Finally, regardless of teachers' affiliation to bilingual-bicultural philosophy of Deaf education, the minority community framework does not offer

teachers the most comfortable conceptual framework from where to understand their job.

Following, the study of teachers' attitudes towards the four social representations of the deaf child are presented. Results show the frameworks on which teachers rely to understand the deaf child and the relationship that they establish within frameworks might be contradictory.

5.4. Teachers' attitudes: Underlying frameworks guiding teachers' perspectives

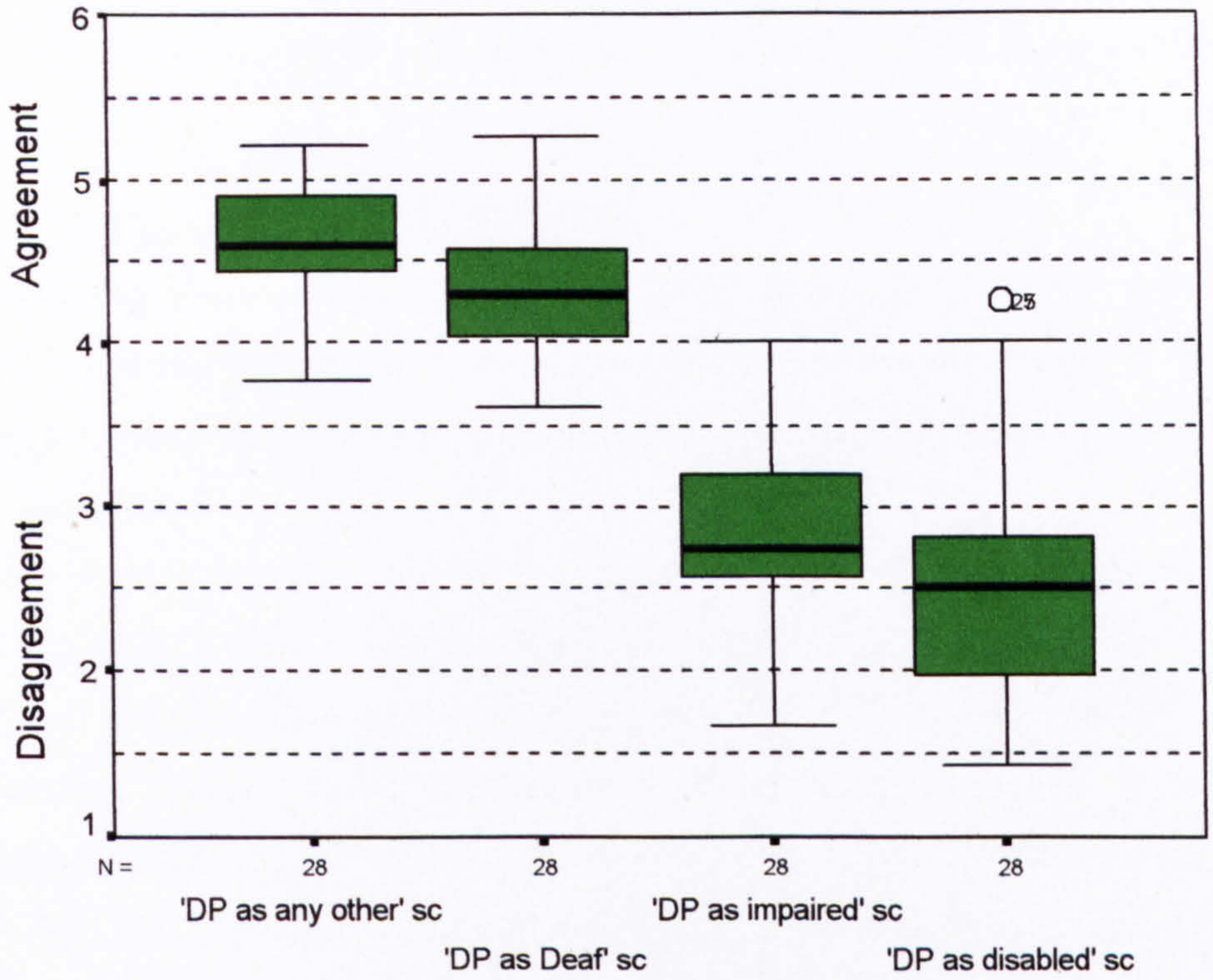
Teachers' identifications with the four social representations of deaf pupils will be presented. In doing so, patterns of teachers responses bring up relationships between the four frameworks. These two issues will be described below.

5.4.1. Teachers' scores on the scales: Shaping an understanding of deaf pupils

This step in the analysis involved considering how teachers combined the four different frameworks to understand deaf pupils, their educational needs and their future, i.e. to illuminate how frameworks were drawn upon by teachers to interpret deaf pupils.

Teachers' responses to the different scales will be illustrated in four different box-plots (Figure 5.1). The green shaded area represents responses of 50% of teachers, the median being indicated by a black line across the box. For each scale the shaded area gives an indication of the extent of agreement or disagreement of all teachers as a group. The wider the box-plot, the greater the variance within the group. The highest and lowest averages are illustrated by arms/whiskers extending from each box. Outlying values appear beyond the whiskers, representing extreme values (see Figure 5.1, 'DP as disabled' scale). The following sections will present teachers' scores in each framework.

Figure 5. 1: Teachers' agreement and disagreement with the four representations of deaf pupils (28 participants)



5.4.1.1. The 'deaf pupil as any other pupil' scale

As a group, the average score (4.60) and the homogeneity (σ=0.34) of teachers' responses were highest in the 'deaf pupil as any other pupil' scale. Teachers displayed very little variation in the identification to statements proposed. This outcome suggests that in terms of framework all 28 teachers operated within an educational framework when understanding the deaf child. Teachers believed that the deaf child would achieve his/her full potential given access to appropriate education. These could be clearly appreciated in teachers' agreement with statement 56- nearly all teachers (89.3%) believed that the introduction of resources in school was the key to deaf pupils' outcome (see Section 5.3.2.2).

5.4.1.2. The 'deaf pupil as Deaf' scale

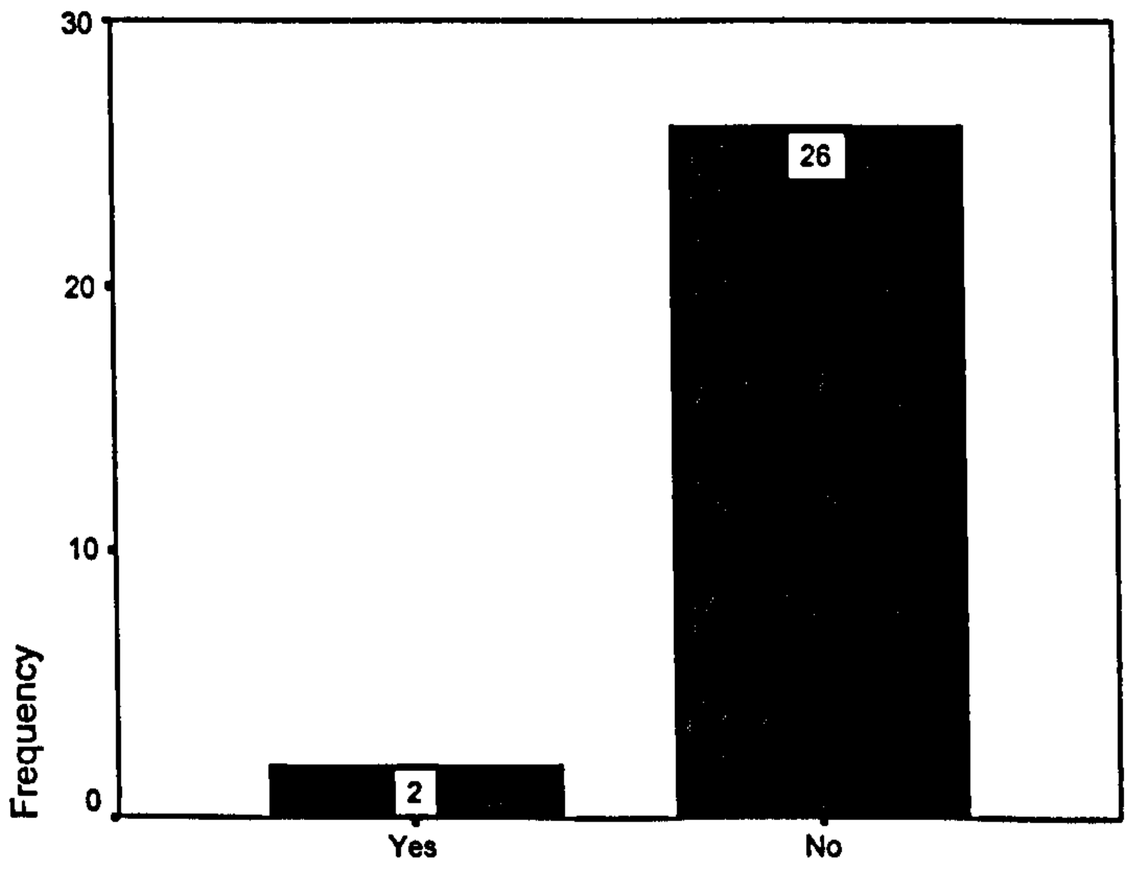
In demonstrating their identification with the 'deaf pupil as Deaf' scale, teachers' ratings were on average (4.35) slightly lower than on the 'deaf pupils as any other pupil' scale. Teachers' responses on the 'deaf pupil as Deaf' scale were once again homogeneous (σ=0.38), and as with the 'deaf pupil as any other pupil' scale their total scores showed that all 28 teachers agreed with the minority community framework's interpretation of deaf pupil. In effect, it can be said that teachers understood deaf children to be members of a Deaf cultural community, with their own natural language –sign language- cultural identity, values and

beliefs. This was appreciated in the agreement that sign language as the natural language of the deaf child found amongst teachers (S14; 78.6%, see Section 5.3.1.1) and similarly the support that 96.5% (see Section 5.3.2.2) of teachers gave to bilingual-bicultural education as a key to deaf children's outcomes in education.

5.4.1.3. The 'deaf pupil as impaired' scale

As a group, teachers rather homogeneously (σ=0.51) did not fully identify with the speech centred framework (x=2.87), within which to understand the deaf pupil. Specifically, from the 28 teachers, only 2 were in agreement with an impaired representation of the deaf pupil (see Figure 5.2). Despite some identification with this framework teachers could not agree completely with this representation of deaf pupil as impaired. On average, although teachers may hold speech as important, they did not see it as a way of overcoming deafness. Teachers' reliance on the impaired framework when thinking about certain aspects of children's life such as the role of speech in academic outcome (see Section 5.3.2.4) and future success in life (see Section 5.3.3.1) was noted.

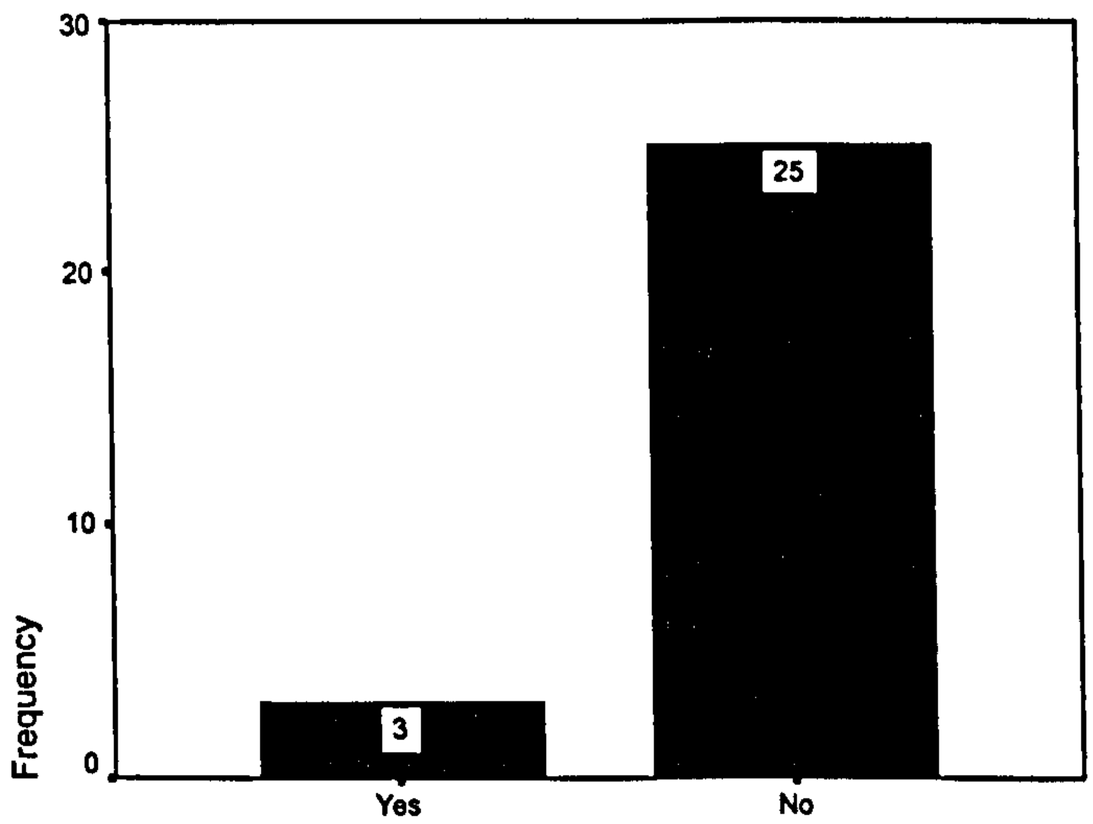
Figure 5. 2:Teachers' affiliation to a speech-centred framework of deaf pupils (28 participants)



5.4.1.4. The 'deaf pupil as disabled' scale

Lowest average was found in the 'deaf as disabled' (x=2.48). In general terms, it might be said that this group of teachers did not identify with the medical framework that pathologises deaf people because of deafness. Despite the low mean rating of teachers as a group in the 'deaf pupil as disabled' scale, variance within the group was the highest (σ=0.74). Consideration of individual responses however showed that at least three teachers consistently agreed with statements which represented the deaf pupil as disabled. Evidence of this was found, for instance, when nearly one third of the teachers agreed to the statement that presented pupils' disability as determining pupils' achievements in life (see Section 5.3.3.1).

Figure 5. 3: Teachers' affiliation to the medical framework of deaf pupils (28 participants)



From these results and particularly considering the average score in each scale, a picture emerges of frameworks with which teachers understand deaf pupils. When thinking about the child, teachers in the study were more likely to look at deaf children from educational and minority community frameworks, than from medical or speech centred ones. Clearly, while it is possible to discuss general patterns a minority of teachers displayed more complex identification between frameworks, combining all four of them simultaneously (see Section 5.3.2.2).

The next section considers the relationship between teachers' responses given within different frameworks.

5.4.2. Relationships between frameworks

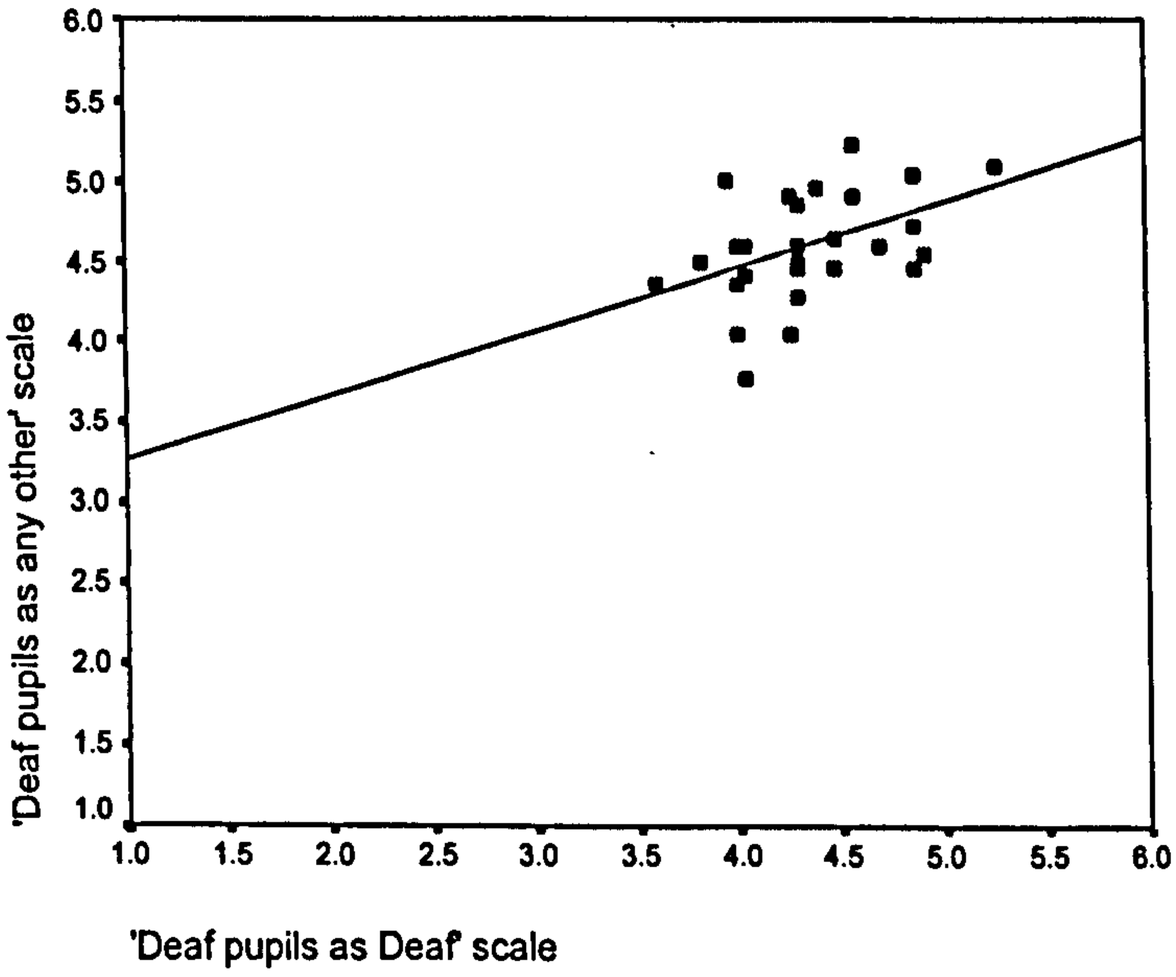
Doing systematic analysis of correlations between scales, four statistically significant relationships were identified. This will be presented in the three sections below:

The first cluster was between the educational-minority community frameworks; and the second cluster was around the medical/speech-centred frameworks. Thirdly, the relationship between the educational and medical/speech-centred frameworks.

5.4.2.1. 'Educational/minority community' cluster

A correlation analysis was carried out to explore the extent to which teachers' responses to the 'deaf pupil as any other pupil' and 'deaf pupil as Deaf' scales were related. Pearson's test revealed a statistically significant relationship between teachers' scores on these two scales ($r=0.45$; $p<.01$). From this, we can see a moderate and positive relationship of teachers' responses on each scale (see Figure 5.4.).

Figure 5. 4: Positive relation between teachers' answers to 'deaf pupil as any other' and 'deaf pupil as Deaf' scales (28 participants)

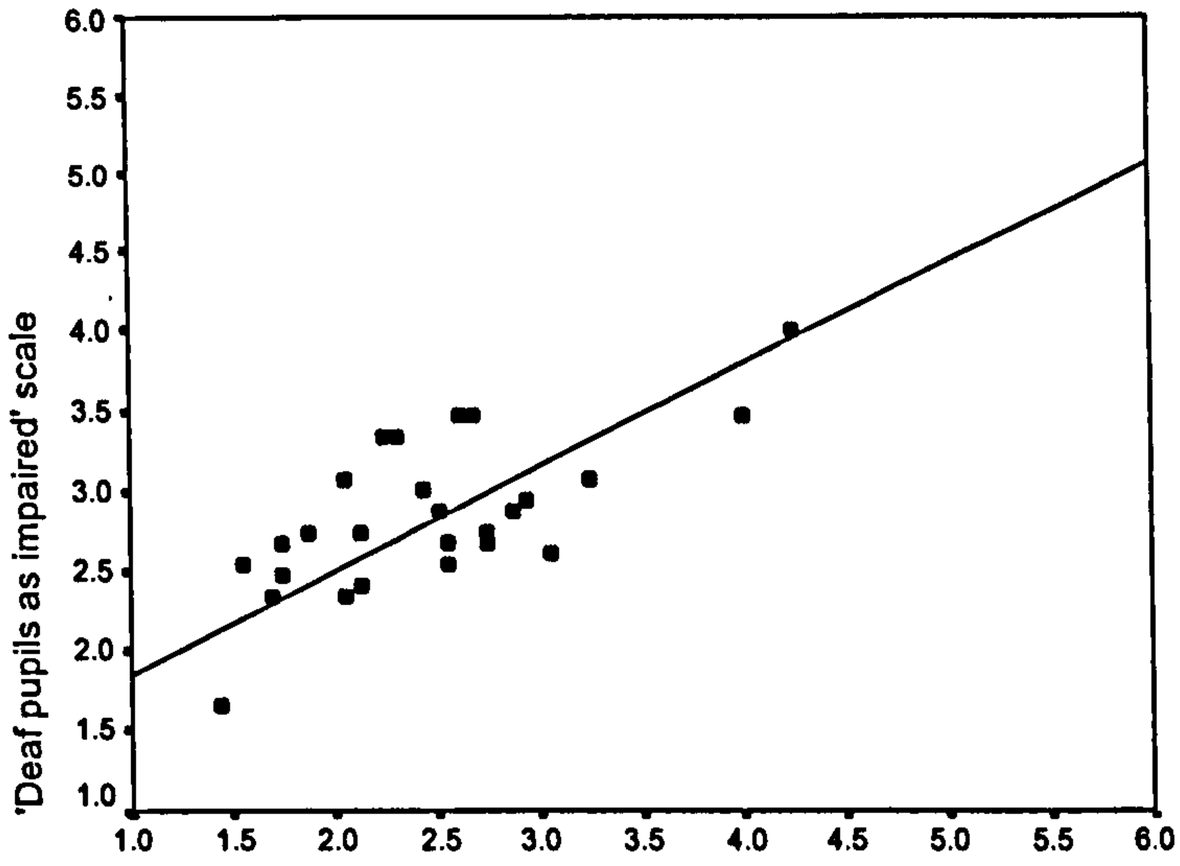


What these results suggest is that teachers who identified with a developmental representation of the child - that is, a deaf child as a child with full potential- were also likely to embrace a framework that presented the child as a Deaf minority member.

5.4.2.2. 'Medical/speech centred' cluster

As with the educational and minority community cluster, a correlation analysis revealed a statistically significant relationship between the medical and speech-centred frameworks ($r=0.78$; $p<.001$). The relation found between the answers given to the responses to these two frameworks was positive and strongly correlated.

Figure 5. 5: Positive relation between teachers' answers to 'deaf pupil as disabled' and 'deaf pupil as impaired' scales (28 participants)



Teachers who did not agree with a medical framework, were also unlikely to agree with a speech-centred framework. In other words, those teachers whose mean rating for 'deaf pupils as disabled', was below 3 also had a low mean rating in the 'deaf pupil as impaired' scale.

From a conceptual point of view, it could be suggested that the more teachers believed the deaf child to be deviant from the hearing norm (as portrayed in the medical framework), the more they drew on models of understanding based on 'restoring' the deaf child to normality by enabling speech (speech-centred framework).

5.4.2.3. Relationship between the clusters

The preceding two sections explore the two dominant trends within the data; this section will now consider in more detail the relationship between the educational framework and the cluster including the speech centred and medical frameworks. In exploring the relationship between the frameworks two statistically significant relationships were observed, namely between the educational and the medical and

the educational and speech-centred frameworks. Within both sets of relationships a similar pattern was identified. That is, teachers who agreed with a developmental representation of the child were also likely to reject representations in which deaf pupils were seen as disabled or impaired. In other words, for both sets of correlations a negative moderate statistically significant relationship was found. When correlation analysis was run between the educational and medical frameworks r=-0.45 (p<.01) (see Figure 5.6.); In a similar trend, r=-0.38 (p<.05. See Figure 5.7) when the educational and speech-centred framework was analysed. Although in this case the relationship observed was smaller, it was still statistically significant.

Figure 5. 6: Negative relation between teachers' answers to 'deaf pupil as any other' and 'deaf pupil as disabled' scales (28 participants)

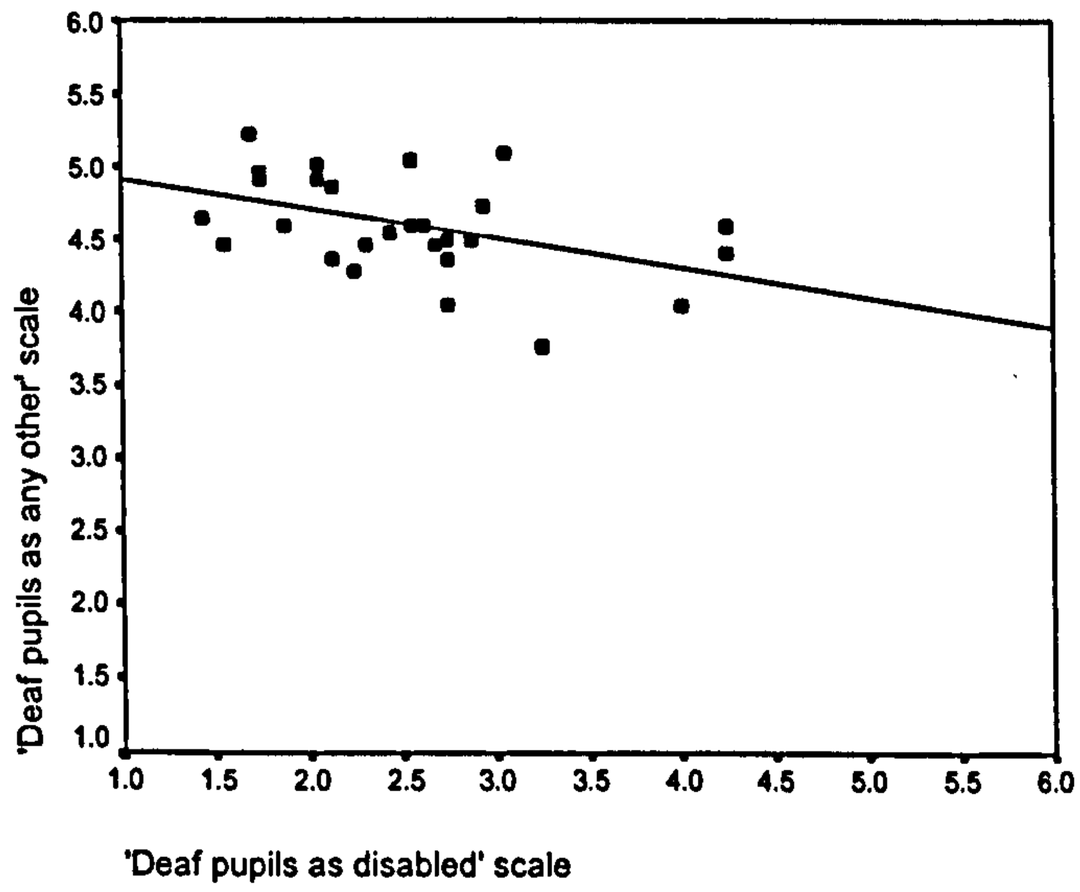
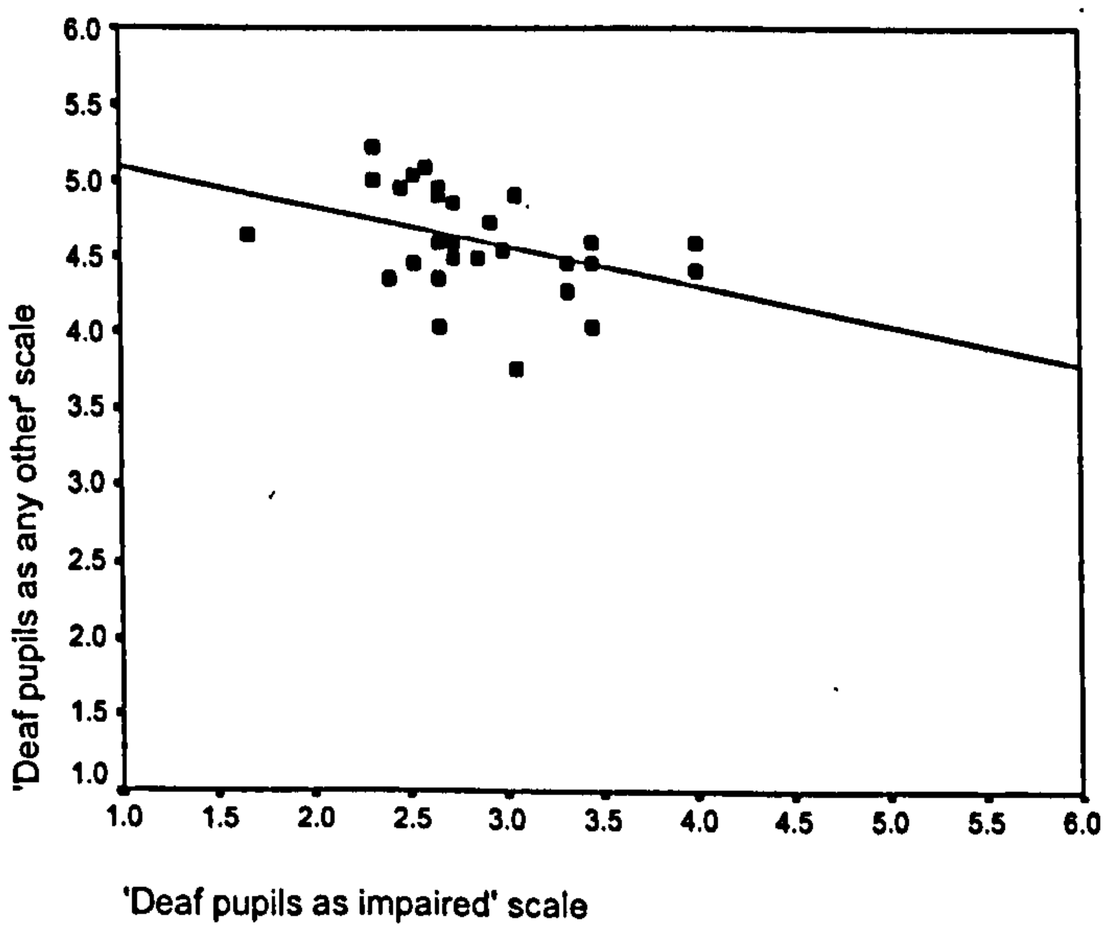


Figure 5. 7: Negative relation between teachers' answers to 'deaf pupil as any other' and 'deaf pupil as impaired' scales (28 participants)



According to teachers' answers, the higher teachers scored in the 'deaf pupil as any other' scale, the more unlikely it was for them to agree with a medical representation of the child, and vice versa. This can be appreciated in Figure 5.7. In general terms, it may be interpreted that, for the majority of teachers in the study, holding a developmental view of the child meant distancing themselves from a representation of the deaf child as disabled. The pattern observed in teachers' answers to both scales is not likely to be explained by chance.

Reflecting on these findings, certain important points emerged. Teachers working mainly within an educational framework were comfortable in accommodating the principles of cultural deafness. However, they found it less comfortable accommodating elements of the impaired representation and it was clearly very difficult to incorporate aspects of the medical frameworks into their working beliefs.

As these schools identified themselves as following a bilingual-bicultural philosophy, it was expected that teachers would strongly identify with a cultural representation of the deaf child. While teachers' average scores in the 'deaf pupil as Deaf' scale were positive (x= 4.35), relative to the strong affiliation shown with the 'deaf pupils as any other pupils' scale, it was less strong. Similarly, identifying to some extent with the cultural representation of the child, it was expected that teachers would reject medical and speech-centred views (i.e. a significant negative relationship). Surprisingly, this was not the case. Correlation analysis between the cultural and the medical and the cultural and speech-centred frameworks were statistically non significant (r=-0.23; p=.241 and r=-0.21; p=.291). Although, these relationships are small and non significant statistically, it is worth noting that in both cases the correlations revealed a negative sign. That is, while no relationship was observed, teachers' responses to the minority community framework still suggested lower levels of agreement with disabled and impaired representations of deaf pupils (i.e. medical and speech-centred frameworks).

In summary, two key trends emerged from the data: firstly, in constructing the deaf child, teachers draw primarily on educational frameworks of understanding. In doing this they distanced themselves in varying degrees from medical and speech-centred philosophies. Secondly, teachers' affiliation with Deaf cultural representations of the child does not depend on a complete rejection of medical

and speech-centred philosophies, although responses indicated a gentle resistance to the latter.

5.5. Teachers' representations of deaf pupils

Teachers' degree of agreement with the statements provides information about the saliency of various frameworks to teachers' understanding of deaf pupils as well as an indication as to the frameworks teachers drew upon in their work with deaf pupils.

It was clear the teachers saw children holistically, that is the cognitive, social and emotional aspects of the deaf pupil, which are as important a component of education as linguistic factors are (see statement 69 in Section 5.3.2.1). Underlying these domains, it became clear that teachers' desire to provide a high quality education motivated their teaching practice (see statements 40, 56 and 10 in Sections 5.3.2.2 and 5.3.2.4).

In addition, as might be expected in a bilingual-bicultural programme teachers strongly acknowledged pupils' cultural identity. Sign language, Deaf culture and the Deaf community played an important role in teachers' understanding of deaf pupils (e.g. statement 37 in Section 5.3.2.2). Somewhat surprisingly, although this Deaf awareness was a significant aspect of teachers' perspectives it did not appear to underline the overall understanding of the child- this was illustrated by teachers' agreement to educational interpretations of cultural issues affecting deaf pupils' lives such as the language, community and culture (see Section 5.3.1). Instead, it was brought in and out of teachers' perspectives when reflecting on teachers' practice.

As might be expected, deaf children were not considered to be severely disabled by most teachers, that is a medical perspective offered little to any understanding of the deaf child. In this respect, teachers in general terms believed more strongly in the power of educational interventions rather than in medical cures (e.g. audiological aids or CI) (e.g. statement 73 in Section 5.3.2.2). Teachers strongly believed that a rich educational experience would allow deaf children the highest quality of life.

Although the dominant picture of the deaf pupils was positive, awareness of the importance of oral communication was not completely neglected. With respect to any limitations that deaf pupils may have had in coping with aural communication, teachers generally considered the role of speech and lip-reading with caution. While most teachers did not see the lack of speech or difficulties in lip-reading as a limitation in the child most

of the time, failure to achieve educationally was interpreted within this framework at several points (e.g. Sections 5.3.2.4 and 5.3.3.1)

Relationships between these representations (see Section 5.4.2.1), suggest that constructivist philosophies underlying the educational framework (i.e. 'Deaf pupil as any other' scale) that try to understand the child's nature, might be promoting teachers' respect for minority community perspectives of deaf children, while distancing teachers from medical and speech-centred perspectives (see Section 5.4.2.3).

In summary, it is important to note that whilst teachers in the study described themselves as working in schools with a bilingual-bicultural approach, the four suggested representations of deaf children –'as any other', 'as Deaf pupil', 'as impaired' and 'as disabled' were drawn upon by teachers to varying degrees. Teachers' perspectives displayed certain fluidity. With this in mind, it is worth noting that although more pathologising representations of the deaf child were shared only by a minority of teachers, these images and frameworks were likely to influence other teachers' attitudes and behaviour. Clearly, this dynamic is likely to have impacted upon the ecologies of these schools.

5.6. Conclusion

This Chapter presented an overview of teachers' beliefs about cultural, pedagogical and psychological issues related to deaf pupils.

In exploring teachers' agreement/disagreement with statements it became particularly salient how on general terms, cultural issues found most agreement when formulated within education frameworks. Teachers did not express agreement with minority community explanations for cultural issues affecting deaf pupils' lives such as language or their cultural community.

Teachers' understanding of deaf pupils' education and development were seen to be understood within educational as well as minority community frameworks, which were found to be strongly related when correlations were run. In general terms, representations at school that portray the child as 'impaired' or 'disabled' were found to be strongly related and did not reflect the way teachers thought about pupils. Findings suggested that constructivist ways of understanding pupils' needs (underpinning the educational framework) had an impact on teachers' affiliation to more traditional ways of understanding pupils' needs in school that emerged from medical perspectives. However,

even though seeing the deaf pupil 'as any other child' helped teachers to distance from portrayals of disability, the deaf child was still seen as having a language/communication impairment at certain points.

Study 3 observed how teachers actively constructed, in their own words, the notion of 'deaf child' as well as giving away images of the child whilst discussing their education. Results of this study, provided in Chapter 6 and 7 will shed some light on our understanding of teachers' ways of thinking.

Chapter 6

Exploring teachers' understandings of deaf pupils and their education: Study 3

6.1. Introduction

The aims of study 3 were twofold: firstly to explore how teachers understood deaf pupils and their education, and secondly to observe how they elaborated constructs of the 'deaf pupil' when discussing deaf pupils and their education (Chapter 7).

The results of focus group discussions with teachers, which explored teachers' understanding of deaf pupils' education, will be presented in this chapter. While deaf pupils' education is the underlying topic of discussion, teachers will also offer insight into fundamental aspects that impact the life and education of the child, such as the family and society. Beliefs about society and the family inform teachers' role and are crucial to develop their work.

What follows is an account of Deaf education as understood from teachers working within bilingual-bicultural approaches. Teachers' beliefs around four emergent themes will be presented. These include reflections on society, families, school and deaf pupils.

Throughout teachers' discussions there was a tension between hearing oriented constructions of deficiency and an emergent understanding of deafness as a cultural difference. This tension became increasingly explicit as teachers approached the task of explaining the notion of 'deaf pupil'.

6.2. Society

Within teachers' focus group discussions, participants explored three themes related to society:

- Deaf children in an historical context
- Beliefs about society's perceptions of deaf children
- Beliefs about the integration of deaf children in society

6.2.1. Deaf children in an historical context

Teachers demonstrated their thinking at different levels; one level that emerged prominently in the focus group was locating the deaf child in an historical moment. To illustrate this we can turn to the example of literacy:

> Today, to have a place in society one has to read and write proficiently. It is not enough any more to 'just about' read and write, as happened in the past.
>
> (Lola. Hearing teacher)

In locating the child in a historical moment a dilemma emerged. Teachers talked about the deaf child in society and one example that symbolised their dilemmas was literacy: There was a feeling that technology and a society of information, created expectations for children to be skilled readers and writers.

Continuing with the example of literacy, teachers felt under increasing pressure to give deaf children access to the written world although they did not always feel confident in facilitating literacy in this context:

> [literacy] is one of the big challenges in education [of deaf children]...definitely, access to the written world is something that we need still to sort out.
>
> (Lola. Hearing teacher)

In contrast, there was also a sense within the respondents' group that society itself was facilitating literacy through new paths like email and text messaging:

> But look, their will to overcome it [reading and writing difficulties]... I am an email user for a long time now, and have recently noted that more Deaf people use email ... because they need it... they can't use the phone to speak to each other. So they use email a lot... Also, the amount of text messages that they [deaf children] send [it is a lot]...and among adults too.
>
> (Marta. Hearing teacher)

These comments reflect ambivalence among participants. Teachers recognised the value of new forms of written language in accessing the written world however, they also saw that the written world constitutes a pressure for deaf pupils to acquire Spanish. And in respect to the latter, they were also not confident in their role in facilitating this process.

The example of literacy illuminates the extent in which teachers' understanding of deaf pupils is rooted in the context of a changing society.

6.2.2. Beliefs about society's perceptions of deaf children

From the focus group discussion, two main images emerged as to how deaf children were understood in society. In the first place deafness was understood as having no

implications for deaf children. For simplicity the example of literacy will be continued to explore this point:

> Lots of people that are not into this [Deaf education] say: "well they are deaf, but they have no other problems than the fact that they are deaf. They do not imagine the problems linked to literacy... well they won't be able to speak but they will be able to read and write. There is a lack of understanding about the difficulties deafness brings, they have normalised it in their mind.
>
> (Lola. Hearing teacher)

The second image was based on society's understanding of deafness to have a devastating consequence on the child's development. Teachers believed that this view resulted in negative stereotypes about deaf people:

> People say that deaf people are more selfish, more isolated, more aggressive, more violent... there are certain stereotypes and prejudices that often are wrong.
>
> (Arturo. Hearing teacher)

Clearly teachers' idea was that society's views fell into two main camps. They believed that both representations led to misleading attributions about deaf children's development, education, and expectations. Within this discussion, there was a strong sense that teachers saw society as having very little awareness as to how deaf people defined themselves. To teachers the key implications of these inaccurate representations were in the production of unhelpful stereotypes of deaf children. In turn, stereotypes about the Deaf community were the results of society's unawareness of deaf people's conditions of life in a hearing society.

There was a strong feeling that dominant hearing society did not do enough in considering deaf people's needs. Teachers saw value in challenging hearing society's understating of deaf people and understood this to be the starting point in addressing how deaf children were understood, as this quote illustrates:

> Researcher: What are the obstacles in deaf pupils education?
> Olga: The obstacles are in those that are not deaf! In my view hearing people (including myself) are very complicated. There is a lot of work to be done in this field- the education of deaf pupils- and there are also lots of prejudices and barriers that need to be brought down by hearing people.
>
> (Olga. Hearing teacher)

In understanding deaf pupils, social representations of deaf children in wider hearing society needed to be considered. For teachers, society needed to make further efforts to understand deaf children from a crucially Deaf perspective in order to deconstruct inappropriate stereotypes. There was a strong sense within the group that misunderstanding deaf people led to inappropriate policies and services that were meeting neither families' nor children's needs:

> If more work was being done with the family, if deafness was detected earlier in the child's life, and if [having a deaf child] on a social level was thought of differently, then there would be early intervention teams, psychologists to give guidance to families, and children would not have so many behavioural problems that overwhelm all of us.
>
> (Sandra. Hearing teacher)

There was significant frustration in respect of the support that families and deaf children were being given. Teachers felt that this situation resulted from the lack of understanding as to what deaf children and their families needed. Teachers' understanding was that society's views of deaf children were embodied in policy making in the deaf child's development/education field. There was great frustration with policies that seemed further to disable deaf children and their families. From the teachers' perspective, failure to meet families' needs clearly put deaf children and their families in a more vulnerable situation.

Teachers provided several examples of situations in which policies were built upon this misunderstanding of deafness:

> Finding people with the right training is very difficult but that is a matter of training, resources, and of having a local authority that supports you, by giving you the chance to go ahead.
>
> (Lola. Hearing teacher)

For teachers the significance of this situation was that families and children were denied the support and services that teachers believed they needed.

A lack of Deaf awareness in society was therefore mirrored in the planning and provision of services for deaf children. Teachers were keen to reinforce Deaf awareness not only in society generally, but in the creation of more appropriate policies for deaf children.

6.2.3. Beliefs about the integration of deaf children in society

First and foremost, there was a strong sense that the school should provide an education that would allow deaf pupils to participate in the hearing world, as this example illustrates:

> I think that (social integration) comes as a result of having certain abilities ... The more competent you are, the more equally you compete in a competitive society ... it is about the tools and skills you have relative to hearing people.
>
> (Carla. Hearing teacher)

Two frameworks of integration were envisaged by teachers. In the first framework the emphasis was on deaf children to be progressively assimilated into the hearing world.

The terms of integration were determined by the hearing majority's values and deaf children would have to play by the rules established. Teachers gave one particular example of this in the role of spoken language:

> [Spoken] Language is what enables integration in society. In the case of the deaf child, it is not that they come with nothing to access society; they have to face integration with the possibilities that society gives them. [Spoken] Language is what will give deaf children power.
>
> (Carlos. Hearing teacher)

In these discussions teachers displayed frustration. Not only were those conditions laid down around integration but also those conditions did not accommodate the nature of deafness. In other words, conditions were based on the acquisition of spoken language, something they considered deaf children were not able to learn to the same degree as hearing children.

In contrast, for some teachers, integration was understood as empowering children to stand on their own feet. Only in this position would they be able to participate equally in society:

> We understand integration as laying the basis, giving them confidence in themselves as individuals, in their language, in another language or an understanding of all of these issues, so that they can achieve greater social integration not just in school but in all the other levels of life.
>
> (Sandra. Hearing teacher)

In the second framework of integration, the responsibility was seen for deaf children to acquire the necessary skills and this would be achieved through quality education.

So, in summary, the integration of deaf children created a tension between teachers' feelings of compliance towards society's rules and a belief that deaf children should first and foremost develop a solid sense of self, from which to face the world.

6.3. The Family

Within focus group discussions, teachers frequently returned to the notion of family and the role of the family in relation to deaf children's education. Teachers' discussions painted a complex picture of the family and the relationship with school and society.

As a general overview teachers constructed their role as educators secondary to the role of nurturing the developing deaf child:

> No matter how much we may do at school, the main agent in the education of deaf children is the family.
>
> (Cristina. Hearing teacher)

However, as we shall see throughout this section, on a day-to-day basis teachers were acutely aware of their needs to compensate when they saw parents not fulfilling the deaf child's needs. It was with some frustration that teachers made distinctions between parents that coped with this special parenting role and those whom they felt did not. Through their discussions certain groups of parents emerged in teachers' minds, the primary distinction being between Deaf and hearing family environments.

6.3.1. Teachers beliefs about Deaf families' environments

Deaf adults were perceived to be the best role models for deaf children's development, and two main reasons were suggested:

Firstly, a shared experience of being deaf. Deaf families are understood to represent stimulating social environments, in which deaf pupils could construct the social experience of deafness in a cultural framework (e.g. Sign Language, Deaf values and behaviours). The deaf child is seen to experience equal status in the family from birth. Teachers saw that parents' experience of deafness guided them in their parental roles. Within this context, teachers saw a natural and instinctive balance within the family, adaptation and accommodation to deafness was not an issue:

> ...deaf children from Deaf families, most of them when the family has good sign language skills and clear rules at home there is a difference ... those deaf children behave quite normally... children from Deaf families have easy deaf points of reference; firstly their parents, then in school their deaf classmates and then other deaf adults.
>
> (Arturo. Hearing teacher)

The second reason as to why Deaf adults represented a better developmental environment for the child was that it was possible for the deaf child to be introduced *from birth* to the idea of a different Deaf and hearing world:

> As in these [Deaf] families it is very clear that one part of society is deaf.
>
> (Arturo. Hearing teacher)

For teachers, Deaf families represented a rich environment, in tune with the deaf child's experience of life. The significant elements for teachers were the fact that deaf children grew up with a comfortable understanding of both the Deaf community and its relationship between the Deaf community and the larger hearing world.

6.3.2. Teachers beliefs about hearing families' environments

When talking about hearing families, teachers identified two main patterns in parents' adaptation to their child's deafness. In the first pattern, deafness was accommodated by parents using visual strategies to approach/communicate with the child:

> These hearing parents behave [with their deaf son] as they do with their hearing son. Of course, they use visual strategies to support communication at home. This [situation] is very different to some other parents that are blocked and limit their communication to isolated words, facts...
>
> (Sara. Hearing teacher)

Although these families were not seen as quite as valuable as Deaf families, they were understood to be enabling certain skills/learning in the deaf child. Teachers clearly placed high value on an environment that recognised the visual experience of the child, as well as accommodating the child's needs. In effect, teachers described parents reorganising their environment, establishing a new balance that facilitated accommodation in the family:

> Some hearing families offer deaf children an environment that is richer, in terms of experience, communication, the use of visual strategies, and so on, they play with them, they allow them to make mistakes, they create a safe environment... it is not the same thing as a Deaf family environment, but these deaf children face less conflict at home.
>
> (Carla. Hearing teacher)

While these families were not considered by teachers to be as rich an environment as a Deaf family, there were still thought to be positive.

The second pattern identified in hearing parents was parents who were inconsistent in the way they adapted to deafness. In contrast with the previous group of hearing parents, teachers identified hearing families that did not seem inclined to adapt to deaf children's needs. The key trait that represented these families was inconsistency in the ways they supported their deaf children, as this example illustrates:

> Deaf children in hearing families have as a role model their hearing parents, who do not explain things properly to them, who are not interested in understanding what their deaf children are saying...who are not able to maintain consistent boundaries...
>
> (Sandra. Hearing teacher)

In these families, communication was typically oriented to speaking and hearing and the use of visual aids to communicate was inconsistent. These parents did not see the need to significantly re-organise their family environment and expected the deaf child to gradually accommodate to them.

> [Confusion is created] not just in the way parents communicate- one day they sign to them, the next one they use speech; but in every sense involved in the upbringing of their child.
>
> (Sandra. Hearing teacher)

Teachers' beliefs about this group of hearing parents were that their inflexibility and inconsistency was unhelpful to the developing child, especially when it relied on the child adapting to the family rather than the family adapting to the child.

On the whole, teachers believed that hearing families still faced significant difficulties when bringing up a deaf child. These difficulties, teachers perceived, were linked to lack of Deaf role models to guide them in their role of parents. Consequently, teachers perceived hearing parents to be at a disadvantage:

> They [parents] consider that they do not know how to be parents of a deaf child, that they can't do it, hearing parents need skills that usually they do not have. Hearing parents of hearing children may want to attend a "Parents' School" to receive information that if they do not get there, they will get anyway from society and other role models around. These role models help you behave as a parent. In the case of [hearing] families with deaf children, parents do not have access to [deaf] parent role models and they [hearing parents] do need to learn lots of skills in relation to their deaf children. In consequence, the family is less involved and less efficient, has lots of fears, uncertainties and lack of confidence...
>
> (Bea. Deaf teacher)

Teachers' concern about the effects of the lack of role models focused on two areas in particular:

- Communication at home
- Stress and acceptance of deafness within the family

- Communication at home:

A key area of concern as a result of lack of Deaf role models was deaf children's language acquisition. Perceptions were that deaf children had limited opportunities to develop good language skills within the family, as this quote illustrates:

> ... in most homes there is very limited communication, restricted to very concrete and iconic ideas-things present in the environment in which communication is taking place. There is no opportunity to explore abstract meanings due to the lack of a linguistic tool, namely language.
>
> (Berta. Hearing teacher)

For teachers, deaf pupils' poor language skills had consequences for their education at school. As this example illustrates, teachers saw that the responsibility for teaching deaf children their first and second languages (i.e. Spanish sign language and then Spanish) was left to them:

> Both languages, sign language and spoken Spanish need to be learnt at school. It is very rare to have deaf pupils that come from home with fluency in a first language. Both languages, even sign language, have to be learnt at school, because most of our pupils come from hearing families.
>
> (Bea. Deaf teacher)

Clearly this was an area of concern, and in addition the lack of opportunity to interact with other people outside the family had implications beyond simply a delay in language development:

> Social skills that hearing children develop in their social relationship with friends of the family, children, adults- deaf children have a delay in all these areas.
>
> (Paz. Hearing teacher)

Teachers concerns were not only that delayed language affected social interactions but also that it set them at a disadvantage when starting school:

> In the early years children learn about social norms and behaviours from their family. When a hearing child arrives at school that social learning continues in their relationships with friends and teachers. Hearing children come with a basic understanding of these issues, deaf children because of the lack of communication with their parents arrive at school without that social learning.
>
> (Luisa. Hearing teacher)

The consequence for teachers was that they felt that school had to compensate for lack of early social learning experiences. Underlying teachers' discussion there was a strong sense for the need of improvement in this area.

- Stress and acceptance of deafness in the family

Teachers understood that the experience of parenting a deaf child had the potential to be emotionally overwhelming for parents:

> I think that having a deaf child is an overwhelming experience for most hearing families.
>
> (Paz. Hearing teacher)

In teachers' view, having a deaf child can put parents under a lot of stress. This stress was seen to be associated with having to make 'correct' choices around communication and other uncertainties as these examples illustrate:

> I would advise parents to take things easy... they want to find a solution to the problem as fast as possible. They need to consider a lot of information and this puts them under a lot of pressure
>
> (Cristina.Hearing teacher)

> It is important to make parents understand that their deaf child will speak to the best of his/her ability... it is important to discuss this with parents as this area generates a lot of anxiety in families.
>
> (Berta. Hearing teacher)

There was concern to teachers that stresses in parents could lead to lack of acceptance of their deaf child at some level. Issues about acceptance were seen not only to affect parenting roles but were also seen to impact on the child's sense of acceptance and security:

> Parents need to accept that they have a deaf child. If they do not accept the child, then they will communicate lots of insecurities to them.
>
> (Henar. Hearing teacher)

> The essential thing [for an effective upbringing] is that deaf children are fully integrated within their families, so they can feel secure/safe ...
>
> (Arturo. Hearing teacher)

Teachers' frustrations with respect to families focused on the lack of accurate information available to them with which to make informed choices and to develop confident parenting skills:

> The most important challenge is to give clear information to the families so that parents make up their minds as to what they want for their child.
>
> (Cristina. Hearing teacher)

In terms of the type of information that was important, teachers felt information around communication took priority over other issues such as Deaf culture and community:

> Maybe initially it does not make a lot of sense to talk about the history of Deaf people... what is necessary at the beginning is to explain to parents that they need to communicate in a different way; and the important role of sign language for deaf children's personal development- of course not overlooking the role of speech. I would explain what a bilingual approach involves... yes, and maybe later on it would be helpful for parents to learn about the history of Deaf people.
>
> (Paz. Hearing teacher)

Information about bilingual-biculturalism enabled parents to make decisions on an ideological level, however teachers were also concerned those parents were supported in translating this theory into practical parenting skills. Teachers described parents as "lacking guidance from the beginning". Information and guidance was thought best delivered through Deaf role models. In this respect teachers believed that effective parenting could be improved by facilitating access both to Deaf adults working with families, and other hearing parents in a similar situation, as this quote illustrates:

> Facilitating effective parenting in hearing families necessitates Deaf role models in the family, contact with parents associations...
>
> (Marta. Hearing teacher)

Teachers believed that parents' emotional reaction to deafness constituted an additional barrier in parenting their child. Particularly if parents were taking time in coming to terms with deafness, they could see the value of emotional support:

> It is extremely difficult. We have families in the school that have been with us for several years and that have more than one deaf child.... we think that these families have accepted their child as a deaf individual ... but in these families you can see that a lot of work still needs to be done in accepting their deaf child... They have a long way to go.
>
> (Luisa. Hearing teacher)

Finally, teachers believed that accessible role models of effective parenting with children would be beneficial for parents. Hearing families were thought to be able to overcome the challenges of bringing up their deaf children, if such services were put in place.

Teachers felt a pressure to compensate for a lack of services by themselves guiding and teaching parents about their deaf children. When teachers felt resistance from parents in performing this role, they were both alarmed and puzzled:

> We think that we have many families that are very collaborative... "at least they've brought the child to school today", "at least, this and that". We are resigned to the fact that families are like this. There is a lot of superficial cooperation. It may look as if parents are willing to work with us, but the truth is that they are not. They do not know how to cope with their children, but they don't let other people help them out.
>
> (Sandra. Hearing teacher)

In turn teachers felt disempowered by parents' reactions and displayed feelings of betrayal and anger towards parents. Teachers felt that the family-school ties were not as strong as they wished. Addressing this situation actually made parents' cooperation a key target in teachers' intervention in school:

> The holistic development of the child is one more challenge that can only be achieved by cooperation and joint intervention of family and school, but sometimes we cannot see how to achieve it. I think that is another of the main challenges in the education of deaf pupils.
>
> (Paz. Hearing teacher)

For teachers, close family-school cooperation represented the most effective way of bringing up deaf children. Achieving this kind of relationship with families emerged as one of the fundamental challenges of Deaf education for these teachers.

There was a clear sense that parents and teachers needed to be in agreement as to what constituted good practice with the child and consistently put this into practice. However, teachers often believed they were in the best position to decide what this should be, as this example illustrates:

> As soon as they cross the doors of the school we have no doubt that they do not behave properly. Outside school they are not in our hands, they are with their parents and with them there are no rules, no manners, no control...
>
> (Luisa. Hearing teacher)

To summarise, teachers could identify a variety of difficulties that families faced when having a deaf baby. While Deaf families were seen to cope without special support, there was a strong sense among teachers that hearing families were in need of greater support. Special services that could provide information and guidance in parenting deaf children needed to be accessible to hearing parents. This situation made teachers introduce new

duties to their role as teachers that often clashed with parents' perception of teachers' responsibilities.

6.4. The School

Within the discussions, teachers were invited to reflect on the objectives and challenges of Deaf education. Teachers clearly believed deaf children should follow the same curriculum as that used by hearing peers. Discussions around these topics led to the meaning of school and education and particularly the importance of an holistic development in the deaf child.

Teachers' aim was, clearly, that the child's development should be seen as a whole. When the notion of holistic development was unpacked it became clear that teachers had quite specific understandings of the term. While recognising that there were several components to holistic developments, for them the most important goal was ultimately social integration in hearing society, and it was this that teachers chose to dwell on in their discussions. Two mechanisms emerged as to how the school could enable deaf pupils' social integration.

The first mechanism lay in teachers' belief that social integration would come as a result of deaf children's abilities to match their hearing peers. With this in mind Deaf education was understood by teachers as a means to provide children with the skills necessary to perform equally. In this sense, Deaf education was constantly seen relative to hearing education. In making this comparison, teachers compared deaf and hearing pupils, and in doing so the expectation was that deaf and hearing pupils should perform equally. Inevitably, what teachers found was that deaf children were not equipped to succeed equally. With this in mind, education was understood to be a compensatory mechanism in providing deaf pupils with the same skills as hearing counterparts:

> And for a deaf child who has deaf parents it is easier because parents can explain certain things but even so deaf children have a big lack of everyday life information that is an obstacle to education.
>
> (Elvira. Hearing teacher)

The education of deaf children was fundamentally considered within hearing frames of reference. Within this framework the challenge for teachers was to provide deaf children with the skills necessary to compensate for the deficits associated with hearing loss, and so perform alongside their hearing peers. Teaching the skills ultimately necessary for social integration was seen as the challenge of Deaf education. This approach to education was facilitated by teachers thinking about deaf children in the same way they

did about hearing children – that is, with the understanding that, given the necessary skills, deaf and hearing children had the same potential for social integration in adulthood. What became clear during teachers' discussions was that some of the beliefs and attributions teachers had about deaf children did not match their evidence about deaf children's performance. Clearly, generating attributions and expectations that relied on hearing children's development as a valid standard for deaf children, misled teachers as this example illustrates:

> In the classroom much of our teaching is based on information that we assume children have learnt from parents, grandparents... those within their social environment. With deaf children you think they know many things and then when you're teaching you realise they don't have all that information.
>
> (Berta. Hearing teacher)

As a result deaf children rarely reached teachers' expectations. Rather than adjust their expectations by revisiting their beliefs about the deaf child, the idea of many deaf children having a deficit in normal social learning experiences, is reinforced:

> This lack of everyday information is an obstacle in working with deaf children. Information that for a hearing child you take for granted, in the deaf child represents a deficit that he/she has. For example, you're going to teach what animals eat, but they do not know what is included in the category of animals. The children whose parents have worked more with them, or who are more 'normal' - they may know these things, but the others, they just don't have this kind of information. You can get really lost with these sorts of things.
>
> (Henar. Hearing teacher)

With this in mind, it was thought essential for teachers to compensate for deaf pupils' limited understanding of the world around them. Making information accessible for the deaf child became a key objective in education in redressing this imbalance in everyday social/life experience:

> The great challenge is to ensure that [deaf children] don't miss information of what is going on in the classroom and in the world around them because missing information is what makes them drag behind hearing children. So what we try to do is to give information equally, so that deaf children can be "soaked" in that information and achieve the objectives in the same way as hearing children do.
>
> (Cristina. Hearing teacher)

Providing accessible information constituted a significant area of concern. Vital 'as a means of accessing information that otherwise wouldn't be accessible', and ultimately redressing the imbalance between deaf and hearing children was the provision of sign language and literacy. These two factors were perceived to constitute key tools in compensating for the lack of information deaf pupils received:

> To give access to events that take place in the classroom you are going to use sign language. If not children miss out information and so daily life loses its meaning.
>
> (Olga. Hearing teacher)

In summary, teachers' believed that levelling out performance between deaf and hearing children depended on teachers compensating for deaf children's lack of knowledge and this was seen as best achieved by providing sign language and developing literacy skills in order to better access and process information. The key outcome would be in promoting deaf pupils' social integration.

The second theme to emerge around education offered a slightly different perspective. If the first perspective offered a 'compensatory model' then the second perspective could be described as 'empowering model'. Teachers described the significance of general development of the deaf child as a prerequisite for social integration.

> Deaf adults who have high degree of confidence in themselves or at least are aware of their handicap in integrating in hearing society... [are better integrated]
>
> (Sandra. Hearing teacher)

Teachers thus considered the development of a solid sense of self through school experiences as a key target in deaf pupils' education:

> The lack of confidence and the feeling of inferiority felt by deaf people and fostered in hearing society, including the school, [is detrimental to social integration]
>
> (Luisa. Hearing teacher)

For teachers, sign language was thought to be essential for pupils' development as Deaf individuals. Sign language was considered not only a way of communicating, but also a key agent in the development of a positive experience for deaf children and so, a positive sense of self:

> ...and the important role of sign language for deaf children's personal development.
>
> (Paz. Hearing teacher)

> If we provide them with sign language, they can become confident, it encourages the child to be independent and also reading and speaking become easier later on.
>
> (Olga. Hearing teacher)

Some teachers could appreciate how on a daily basis sign language gave deaf children the opportunity to communicate with their peers in an autonomous way:

> School is the place in which deaf children can let off steam and communicate everything that they have inside. In school they can use sign language to communicate ideas, and experiences that have taken place during the week-end and that they haven't been able to share with anybody... they tell each other what they've been thinking while they were at home, what crossed their minds, what they think they understood on the TV and so on ... all of that takes place here because they can sign and communicate.
>
> (Sandra. Hearing teacher)

The development of a solid sense of self and identity therefore became a priority for teachers in deaf children's education.

For teachers, literacy and speech were an important component when they considered deaf children in the wider context of their society. However, teachers' views of the importance of literacy and speech are mediated by their understanding of the deaf pupil. While they saw their role quite clearly as facilitators in a learning process they also saw deaf children both as proactive and as having the potential to reflect on their social needs and engage in their learning.

> If early in life deaf children are given sign language, acquiring speech or being skilled in literacy is one of the big challenges, but they have time to learn how to achieve it. As time goes by and they grow older they realise themselves their need to read and to speak in order to be understood by hearing people. Deaf children themselves help us in this task [learning to read, write, speak].
>
> (Sandra. Hearing teacher)

To summarise, this second perspective relied on the notion that having confidence in the hearing world necessitated having a strong sense of self and identity as a Deaf person.

The school was understood as constituting an environment in which deaf pupils could acquire skills but, most importantly, could be prepared to face society with confidence in themselves as Deaf individuals.

In both views, teachers were keen to distance themselves from what they understood to be obsessive *oralism* by reinforcing their relaxed approach to speech development. It could be felt within the discussions, that for some teachers the acquisition of speech by deaf children was more the results of social pressures, rather than of their professional belief that it would guarantee social integration for their deaf pupils.

Clearly, speech did have a role outside the school in communicating with hearing people and teachers were keen to point out that parents often put pressure on the school to give speech more prominence in the education of deaf children:

> Parents want their children to speak ...so you try and encourage pupils to develop speech. But for us this is not enough. We want deaf children to communicate ideas. Speech is not the most important thing - letting the child communicate with ease in sign language is also essential.
>
> (Berta. Hearing teacher)

Teachers were also obliged by law to teach speech, 'the language of the majority society' and it was evident that much of their thinking was in line with legislation which aimed to promote better integration.

In line with their concern to promote social integration and despite the importance awarded to speech acquisition, it was clear that for them sign language represented the

most effective way of communicating and promoting social integration for children with speech playing a secondary role:

> Speech does not determine so much for deaf children future integration... it is not always the case that [deaf/Deaf] people that are fully integrated are the ones that have better speech abilities... Deaf adults who have high degree of confidence in themselves or at least are aware of their handicap in integrating in hearing society... [are better integrated]
>
> (Marta. Hearing teacher)

To summarise, for teachers the goal of education was to facilitate deaf pupils' integration in society. This goal could be achieved either by actively compensating for deaf pupils' deficits especially around communication or by empowering deaf pupils' identities and sense of self. In either case sign language was understood to constitute an essential vehicle in achieving this goal and speech awarded a secondary and yet significant role.

6.5. Deaf pupils: Teachers' representations of the child

Throughout the discussion it became clear that teachers could comfortably talk about the deaf child in many different contexts/domains and at different levels (i.e. society as well as individuals). What became clear was that teachers held quite robust ideas as to what the deaf child represented to them. These representations can be seen as constituting two frameworks: hearing-oriented construction of deficiency and an understanding of deafness as cultural difference.

The primary difference between these two frameworks was that in the first representation deaf children were understood primarily in *relation* to hearing children as these examples illustrate:

- 'Deaf pupils are children': Deaf pupils were represented as no different from other ordinary hearing children.
- 'Deaf pupils are children who cannot hear': Deaf pupils were described in terms of degrees of hearing loss, the utility of the hearing aids, and their cochlear implants.
- 'Deaf pupils are children with a language disorder': Deaf children had a problem developing speech, which was generalised to a language disorder.

And in the second framework deaf children were represented as individuals in their own right:

- 'Deaf pupils are people with a visual experience of life'. This representation drew on deaf pupils' visual experience and communication through a signed language.
- 'Deaf children as part of a socio-cultural group or community'. Deaf pupils were portrayed as future deaf adults with a culturally Deaf identity that reflected what they could do in life.

In addition to these two frameworks, other representations were offered by teachers. These representations illustrated hearing teachers' lack of knowledge and experience in understanding deaf children and effectively representing the notion of 'deaf pupil':

- 'Deaf pupil as a stranger to hearing teachers'. For hearing teachers, deaf pupils represented a way of being unknown to them and difficult for them to understand intuitively.

The following chapter will explore these representations in more detail and will shed some light on the processes by which these representations might be constructed by professionals.

6.6. Conclusion

Teachers' illustrated how thinking about deaf children necessitates seeing the child as part of other social systems such as society, family and school in which they are immersed. Teachers' representations of society, family and the schools allowed the researcher to contemplate how teachers held polarised ideas between hearing understanding of deficiency and culturally Deaf views on difference.

It became progressively clear that while in Study 2 teachers showed an intention to distance themselves from medical and speech-centred representations of deaf children and their education on an attitudinal level (see Chapter 5), teachers still operated very much within frameworks of understanding often close to medical frameworks. While this was repeatedly observed when talking about integration and school, it was also clear that a framework that interpreted difference within Deaf cultural terms was also being used at times. This was consistent with the findings presented in Chapter 5.

Chapter 7 will focus on exploring constructions that hearing and Deaf professionals offered of deaf pupils and the processes by which teachers might be constructing representations of deaf pupils.

Chapter 7

The role of professional identities in the construction of the 'deaf pupil': Study 3

7.1. Introduction

Teachers in Study 3 discussed the notion of 'deaf pupil' and his/her education in several focus groups (see Section 3.5.3). Throughout these discussions, different ways in which teachers construct deaf children emerged. The analysis of teachers' 'constructs' of deaf children offered insight into how teachers elaborate constructions of deaf pupils, as well as the content of their constructions.

Analyses of teachers' constructs were carried out using Kelly's Personal Constructs Theory (see Section 2.5.1). As a brief reminder for the reader, key points are that Kelly (1955) saw constructs as guides for living. 'Constructs' are our interpretations of events through which we categorise reality. In this categorising of the world, we look for patterns in events, that can help us anticipate what will happen when facing a similar object or event in the future. Constructs reproduce an event or object in our minds. There are two ways in which people elaborate constructs: by exploring new areas of the construct and applying them to a wider range of experiences (extension) and secondly by giving greater detail to the construct (definition).

When constructs are arranged in a hierarchy they form a construct system. Through the construct system a person draws on his/her unique beliefs and values to perceive and interpret the world. This lens or construct system, integrates our social and cultural experiences and defines who we are. Our interpretations of the world speak about ourselves, our beliefs and value systems. Our identity gathers our beliefs and values. For this reason, our identity plays an important part in the way we see the world.

In what follows, analysis of teachers' constructs of deaf pupils will be carried out.

7.2. Elaborating constructs of deaf children from hearing identities

Within the teachers' focus group discussion, five constructs of the 'deaf child' could be identified. Each construct brought up the different strategies that teachers used when constructing the deaf child. Each strategy served different purposes. To summarise, teachers' constructs were:

- 'Deaf pupils are children'
- 'Deaf pupils are children that cannot hear'
- 'Deaf pupils are children with a language disorder'
- 'Deaf pupils are people with a visual experience of life'
- 'Deaf pupils are strangers to hearing teachers'.

These will be discussed below. Having looked at the content of teachers' constructions (see Section 6.5), we will now consider the process in which teachers engaged.

7.2.1. Stating teachers' identity or professional identity

As the interviewer was hearing, teachers participating in the focus group could expect the interviewer to bring preconceptions about deaf children. The first idea that teachers keenly put across in the focus group was that the deaf child was *a 'normal' child*. In an attempt to neutralise the tendency in mainstream society to overpathologise the deaf child, teachers would describe the deaf child by offering an initial idea of normality illustrated by the phrase *a child*. By doing this, the interviewer in front of them would be thinking of a hearing child, and hence a 'normal' child.

The interviewer, however, was not a stranger to many of the teachers in the study. These teachers knew about the interviewer's sensitivity to cultural representations of deaf people. It was likely that, being teachers aware of the interviewer's background, teachers attempted to state clearly their professional identity by highlighting a *normalising* discourse.

Teachers' strategy was to put forward something relevant. Teachers made a statement about where they stood in the complex world of Deaf education. Teachers tried to convey their respect for the deaf child and positive attitude towards Deaf community, setting a distance from medicalised views on deaf children. They felt the need to state that they did not see the child as an 'ill' child. It seems that hearing teachers' loyalty to cultural views portrayed by the Deaf community was sometimes vulnerable to extreme critical views.

These hearing teachers, aware of the notorious role of hearing teachers in the history of Deaf education, often highlighted in Deaf cultural views, felt the need to state clearly where they were as professionals in Deaf education. The 'normalising' strategy of portraying the deaf pupil as an 'ordinary' child is a representative core value of their professional culture; it will be discussed in the next section.

7.2.2. 'Fake normalisation': setting the grounds for ecological dissonance

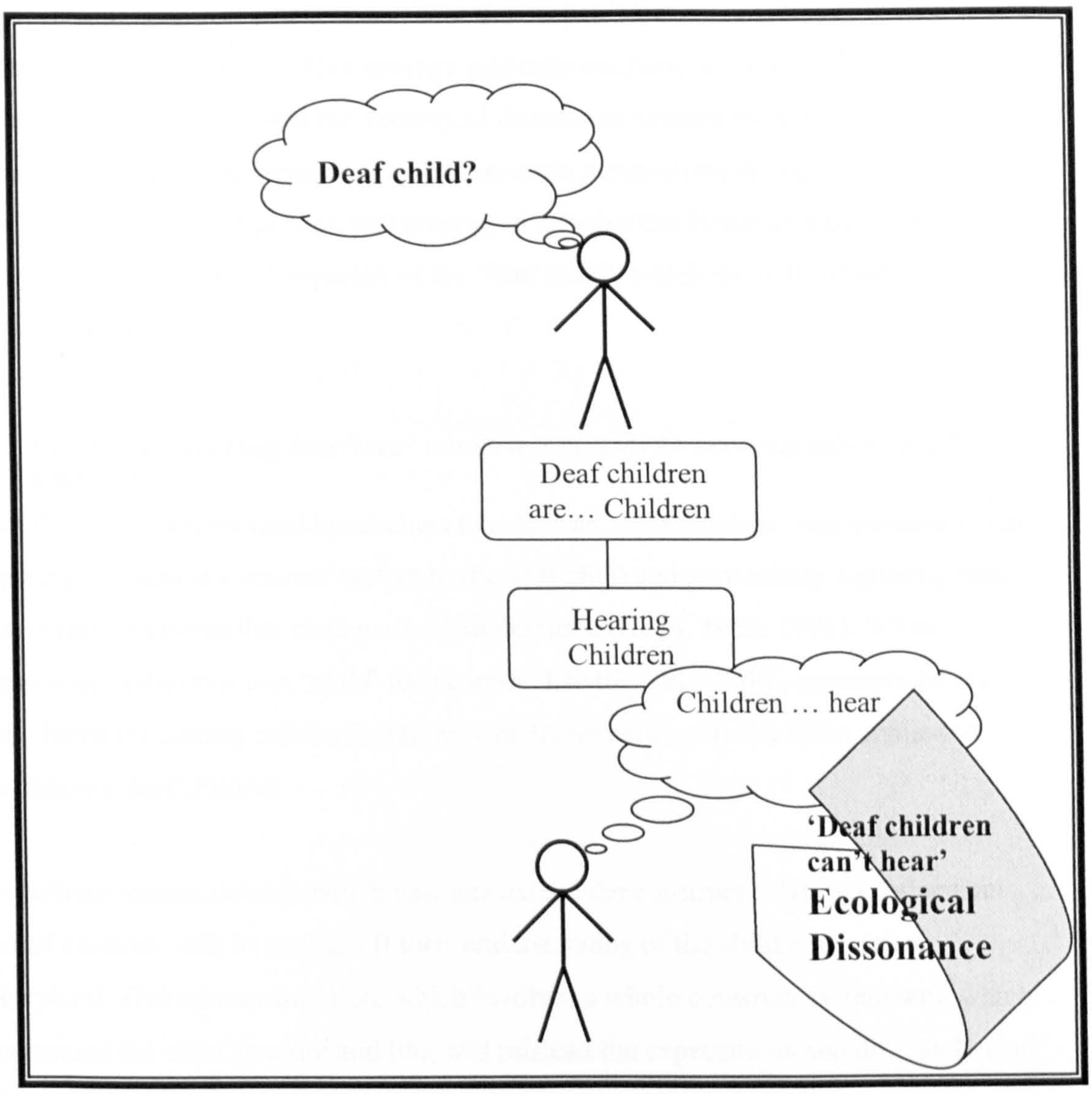
Constructing 'deaf pupils' as 'ordinary children' suggested in itself a 'normalising strategy'. Although at first sight it seems a harmless representation of deaf pupils, it is likely to create detrimental consequences affecting teachers' understanding of the deaf child. The implication of this seemingly simplistic way of constructing deaf children will now be analysed.

When teachers described 'deaf children as *children'*, they usually felt the need to supplement their description with more information. Sometimes teachers added that deaf children could not hear, at other times that deaf children used sign language, or that they had a visual experience of life. The need to complete the representation of '*just a child*' responds to a very interesting dynamic at the core of this study: an ecological dissonance. The ecological dissonance created by reducing 'deaf children' to the more normalised idea of '*children'* can be analysed from a Kellyian perspective. To do so, we turn to the Theory of Personal Constructs (Kelly, 1955) as seen in the introduction to this Chapter (see Section 2.5.1 for a more detailed explanation).

As Figure 7.1 illustrates, when teachers were describing the notion of 'deaf pupil', they did not do so by defining the deaf pupil in the context of deaf children's life experience. Instead, they used a different strategy the aim of which was to normalise the representation of the deaf child. Teachers did this by using the construct *children* to define deaf children.

In using this strategy, teachers created a hierarchy in which the construct '*child'* was placed at the top. Teachers' construction of a '*child'* responded to their personal, social and cultural representations of what '*child'* meant. For these teachers, the construct '*child'* had been socially and culturally constructed in hearing groups. The construct also gathered teachers' own experience of childhood as hearing children. When the construct '*child'* came to teachers' minds, it reproduced what had been personally, socially and culturally constructed throughout their hearing experience of life.

Figure 7. 1: 'Fake normalisation' process of defining deaf children



Dynamics such as these are identified in the behaviour of participants in the focus group discussion. As soon as the construct '*child*' was used to represent 'deaf children', quite literally teachers paused. There was an atmosphere of discomfort and a small pause before teachers added the description, and this built a feeling of complicity among participants. The urge to add new information to the construct '*child*' was interpreted by the researcher as an example of how teachers realised that for them the construct '*child*' and *'deaf child'* were not the same. However, in a way teachers felt that it was their duty to know who the deaf child was and hence complete the representation.

In consequence, the '*normalising'* strategy used by teachers fails to achieve its goal of normalising the deaf child. Instead, teachers' expectations for deaf children, elicited by the construct '*child*', are not fulfilled, and so by attributing qualities to the deaf child that are not evident, the whole '*normalising'* strategy forcefully makes deaf children fail. Deaf

children cannot measure up to the pre-established hearing standard of normality. As a result of making incorrect attributions about the deaf child, this immediately transforms deaf children to '*not normal*'. This strategy misleads teachers, leaving them with a tension. This tension illustrates the ecological dissonance created by teachers when they try to understand the deaf child from an ethnocentric perspective, disregarding the true nature of the deaf child. Teachers will attempt to dissolve the dissonance by engaging in new processes of construct formation of the 'deaf child', which we will consider in the following sections.

7.2.3. Extending hearing teachers' construct system to accommodate 'deaf children'

One of the two strategies used by teachers to construct 'deaf children' was extension, that is applying an existent construct system to the deaf child and particularly exploring areas of that construct system that were partially understood (Kelly, 1955; 1991). When teachers extend the construct '*child*' to accommodate the 'deaf child', assumptions are applied based on hearing children's nature, which inevitably will fail when applied to understanding deaf children.

The construct system through which teachers extend the construct '*child*' to understand the 'deaf children' will be setting off their understanding of the child's nature as auditory/oral. This core assumption, which involves a whole construct system with which to understand the child's nature and life, will mislead the expectations and ultimately lead teachers to wrong attributions. This tension that has been named 'ecological dissonance' has then to be resolved.

Teachers explored two areas that are challenged by the deaf child: their aural experience and their communication experience. As it will be seen in the next sections the tension is resolved by portraying the deaf child as an ill child as a result of not complying with the assumed hearing standard. So, it can be said that this way of understanding deaf children is anchored in an ethnocentric view of deaf children that clashes with the cultural recognition assumed in the bilingual approach of Deaf education.

7.2.3.1. Exploring teachers' aural experience

Teachers identified 'hearing' as a key source of tension. The first strategy to resolve teachers' inner tension, as a result of the ecological dissonance, was to address the hearing dimension that the construct 'children' incorporated for hearing teachers. As it is illustrated by this teacher below:

> Well, above all that they are children ... they are deaf, they have a hearing impairment, they cannot hear.
>
> (Cristina. Hearing teacher)

As Festinger (1980) explains in the Theory of Social Comparison (see Section 1.8), it is in the process of comparing ourselves to others, that people evaluate and learn about their personal qualities. Young (1999) described hearing parents becoming aware of their auditory/oral experience when they faced their deaf baby. When hearing people face deaf people, they realise that hearing is a central part of who they are. It is through 'social comparison' (Festinger, 1980) that hearing people's ability to hear becomes a salient trait of their identity. The ability to hear becomes particularly evident when they face a deaf person. Deaf pupils' lack of hearing becomes a salient trait to their hearing teachers.

Hearing teachers discovery of their ability to hear when looking to the deaf child, takes them closer to their own life experience and sense of self. It is from their hearing identities that they construct the deaf child. This journey to themselves and their own hearing experience anchors teachers in a hearing framework that will distance them from the deaf child's reality. As teachers will go on to construct 'deaf children' by exploring an experience that is not part of the deaf child's life, they will interpret 'deaf children' as children that cannot hear. This way of constructing the deaf child is rooted in a hearing oriented way of understanding a child and reflects a single way of interpreting the world.

7.2.3.2. Exploring teachers' communication experience

A second attempt to accommodate 'deaf children' into a hearing construct system led teachers to explore their understanding of communication and language, as described in this quote:

> They are children like any other, what is happening is that they have a language impairment.
>
> (Rita. Hearing teacher)

When teachers represented mentally the idea of *'a child, as any other'*, they anticipated an oral experience, like that in hearing children. This oral experience represented, for these teachers, the interactive dimension of human beings. That communicative experience anticipated by the construct *'child'* became a nuisance when teachers tried to accommodate the deaf child into this construct.

For hearing people communication and language concretise in oral and written expressions. Language and communication is strongly associated with oral languages. When hearing people face deaf people, the communicating experience is challenged. As we mentioned before, the aural experience becomes salient, when meeting deaf people. The strong relation that holds together aural and oral experiences and highlights the centrality of speech for hearing teachers' understanding of communication.

The deaf child, who was for teachers *'a child, as any other'*, became a child with a communication or language impairment. In this case too, teachers adopt a view which prevents them from seeing things from other than their own perspective as hearing beings.

Furthermore, not only does the teachers' image of the deaf child as '*a child, as any other'* anticipate orality, but also it creates a second expectation that concerns the environment. By seeing the deaf child as *'a child, as any other'* teachers assumed that children and the adults surrounding them, would cope in a communicative environment of the same nature: auditory/oral. This assumption about the congruence of the environment and the child creates the ecological dissonance. A visual way of communicating and constructing life, in convergence with the deaf child's nature, is not considered in the first place. The result of this incorrect assumption, forces the deaf child to fail in fulfilling teachers' expectations. Instead of considering a visual way of communicating as natural for the deaf child, they medicalise the deaf child when 'he/she' falls short of the standard set by the construct '*child, as any other'*.

Literature on the linguistic development of deaf children has been suggesting since the 80s, that deaf children experience no more difficulties than hearing children in developing their natural language (i.e. sign language) when given an adequate social-linguistic environment. This has been consistently observed in deaf children of Deaf parents who use sign language to communicate with their deaf children from birth (see Section 1.6.4). For this reason it was determined that deaf children, provided with a social and linguistic environment in accordance with their experience of life do not experience more language and communication disorders than any other hearing child.

7.2.4. Defining a construct of 'deaf children'

In contrast to what has just been explored, hearing teachers used another strategy to elaborate a construct of 'deaf pupil'. In this case, teachers made an effort to 'define' (Kelly, 1955; 1991) the deaf child. 'Definition' is described by Kelly (1955; 1991) as a process of confirming in detail aspects of experience already construed (see Section 2.5.1).

The next two sections illustrate how teachers tried to switch from a hearing framework to a Deaf cultural framework of deaf children, promoted by the Deaf community. Teachers' attempts to define the deaf child were not easy and resulted in extension of teachers' self-experiences in using a visual code or in a feeling of complete lack of understanding of the child. However discouraging these two attempts may feel to the teacher, there is unquestionably great value in their efforts. Teachers are trying to construct a belief and value system that will allow them to distinguish fully the deaf children from the child's real nature.

7.2.4.1 Defining the child from teachers' own visual experience

This construction offers a different view of deaf children. While in previous constructions teachers tried to interpret 'deaf children' by fitting deaf children into a hearing representation of 'child', here teachers made an effort to define the deaf child from what they saw in front of them. In effect there was a break in the process, teachers stopped exploring further aspects of their construct 'children' to elaborate a new construct: deaf children. For the first time, teachers tried to construct the deaf child from the child's experience of life. In the following example the informants describe the different codes used by deaf children without comparing deaf children with hearing children.

> [Deaf children] are people that get information through their eyes. As a result of their [communication] code, for example, sign language the [linguistic] code that they use is different. It's a visual code, signed. Other children that are not like ours, that do not have sign language ...still the information is reaching them visually...
>
> (Arturo. Hearing teacher)

This change in teachers' dynamic – i.e. from extending the meaning of the '*child*', to defining '*a deaf child*' - represented a significant step forward in producing a construction of the deaf child that integrated the experiences, values and beliefs of the children themselves. In effect, the foundations are laid for a definition based on the child's experience. The outcome can be described as twofold: The most significant is that the risk of ecological dissonance is reduced.

A secondary effect, more noticeable in the classroom, is that expectations and attributions are more likely to be constructed accordingly with the child's nature.

Teachers' interpretation of the child from a visual perspective focuses mainly on the communication experience and this is of significance. Constructs are constituted by replication of events based on one's own experiences (Bannister and Fransella, 1986; Kelly, 1955 in Section 2.5.1). These hearing teachers' construction of life as a visual experience has resulted in their attempts to communicate in sign language. Hearing teachers had experienced effective communication using a visual code when communicating with deaf people and deaf pupils. The experience of communicating visually through sign language brought teachers one step closer to understanding the visual nature of deaf children and the notion of sign language as a natural language of deaf children. In other words, hearing teachers in the study were able to see the deaf child as a visual child because they themselves had achieved a visual interpretation of human interaction whenever they successfully communicated in sign language. As Kelly (1955;1991) explains it is not enough to have the same or similar life experiences to understand someone, one must also make a similar interpretation of those events to truly understand other persons' meanings.

On the surface, teachers are getting closer to a more realistic understanding of the child, however their attention is almost exclusively on one single experience: communication. Evidence from the testimonies of deaf people, as well as that explored in the notion of Deafhood (Ladd, 2003) reinforces the fact that a visual experience of life has implications that go far beyond communication alone, to embrace e.g. a construction of beliefs, values, social and emotional experiences (Ladd, 2003).

The analysis of teachers' construction illustrates two important findings. On the one hand, it is important to note these hearing teachers are able to move from a hearing framework to cultural Deaf framework to construct the notion of 'deaf pupils'-increasing their chances of achieving a cultural empathetic understanding of the deaf child. On the other hand, it cannot be ignored that teachers' interpretation of the child from a visual perspective is restricted to communication. The latter crucially highlights how experience can be used to build bridges between the deaf child and the hearing teacher.

7.2.4.2. Defining the nature of being deaf: Moving towards a change

Encounters with deaf children on a daily basis challenged the normalising image established by the hearing based construction of the 'deaf pupil as *'a child'*. Defining 'deaf children' from what deaf children were, implied that teachers needed to see into the child's experience as constructed from the child's eyes. However this process was not immediately available to them. Teachers were faced with a child with whose experience they were unable to empathise. The effects were twofold: firstly, to put them in a position where they felt professionally 'lost' and in this situation the deaf child became a *'stranger'*; however, and secondly to lay the foundations for a more helpful interpretation of the child. The following example illustrates this:

> And the feeling... of... let's see if I make myself clear...of mutual unawareness. With a hearing child you have automatically clues of what he can be thinking... how to speak to him, how to joke with him, you have clues to interpret all his facial signs all his... everything... you are with someone that you recognise. [...] While with deaf children that does not happen. At least it does not happen for me as hearing person. I do not have all the clues. I do not feel equally, that does not mean that with a hearing child I will understand him. Lots of times what they say is incoherent, they say things that doesn't make sense, but it is the same, it does not make me think, 'I do not understand him', it doesn't! I take it for granted that what he is saying has a meaning for him, he is telling me something that he has lived, and although I do not understand I follow him and we are able to establish... because there is something. While with a deaf student there is difficulty in recognising the other, there is a sense of 'what is he saying to me'? It is the same in sign language, in speech...
>
> (Lola. Hearing teacher)

Teachers themselves reflected upon how this situation might have occurred. There was a strong sense that there was an absence of significant social experience with Deaf people and this had disabled them in terms of establishing relationships with deaf pupils. In effect it becomes difficult for teachers to empathise with their pupils.

Kelly (1955; 1991) said that interacting implies being able to interpret the other person's meanings (see Section 2.5.1). In consequence, for Kelly (1955; 1991) communication is hindered when we are not able to observe from the other persons' life experience. This process described by Kelly was witnessed when teachers described their inability to empathise with the deaf pupils at times, despite the code used. The critical outcome of teachers' difficulties in accessing the deaf child's world put forward that efficient communication relies on the

ability to recognise the deaf child in teachers and in that way, be able to see the world through their eyes.

The link between the teacher and the deaf child is broken, as hearing teachers have few resources to understand the child's experiences in the context of the child's own life. In spite of the strategies that hearing teachers may use to gain access to the deaf child's world (e.g. communicating in sign language), they still feel the gap between the deaf child and themselves. The gap, that is then provoked by the lack of social nurturing in a Deaf social group, prevents teachers from seeing deaf children's meanings. In consequence, the social interaction between teachers and deaf pupils is reduced to doing things to each other. Yet, a true relationship that should be socially enriching for the pupil is hardly likely to be established (Bannister and Fransella, 1986).

Clearly these processes are not limited to cognitive interpretations, the effect on teachers is also emotional. Emotions, in the theory of personal constructs, are seen as specific aspects of construct systems in a state of change (Bannister and Francella, 1986). Anxiety, for Kelly (1955; 1991) was generated when one could only partially construe an object or event. Teachers realised that the deaf child's experience lay outside their own construct system. The inability to see the child accurately or understand his/her experience provoked anxiety. As a result, the notion of the deaf child as 'the unknown' was associated with feelings of discomfort, frustration or anxiety.

Despite these emotions teachers found themselves in a position to achieve a closer understanding of the child. The emotional component of this situation allowed a shift from a hearing framework to the discovery of Deaf/visual constructs of 'deaf pupils'. Teachers could disregard unhelpful labels when describing the deaf child, and focus on creating a new construct from the child's own point of view.

7.3. Constructing deaf pupils from Deaf identities

Although the representation of d/Deaf participants in the focus groups was relatively small (see Section 3.5.3.3), their contribution to Deaf bilingual-bicultural education was regarded by hearing teachers as significant. Deaf professionals experience offers insights into how Deaf people construct the deaf child based on their personal experiences.

The first relevant aspect of Deaf professionals' construction of deaf children was that, unlike the hearing teachers, they made an explicit distinction between deaf children and hearing children, and this distinction was grounded in the deaf child's visual experience of life. This is the core difference compared with hearing children. While similar, the fundamental perception and construction of the world was different for the Deaf professionals.

> If I had to tell someone, who does not know anything about deaf people, what is a deaf child like I would say that there is an important difference, that in many ways they are going to be like any other child, but because they are deaf they depend on visual input.
>
> (Bea. Deaf teacher)

In contrast with the hearing professionals' strategy of normalising difference between deaf and hearing children, Deaf professionals located this difference as the basis of an accurate understanding of the deaf child. It is of note that Deaf professionals often confidently, objectively and unemotionally stated that there was a difference between deaf and hearing children. This view is reinforced by pointing out that hearing devices made little difference, visual input was what deaf children used to apprehend the world.

Placing the visual nature of the deaf child at the heart of their understanding of deaf children, still allowed Deaf professionals to construct the child in different ways. In doing this, Deaf teachers would not be describing only the deaf child but also be describing themselves. The contributions by this group of professionals were relatively few within the discussion but they were nevertheless clear and heartfelt. While their voice was brief, there were passionate accounts about their identities.

7.3.1. Finding their inner deaf child

Deaf professionals' definitions of deaf children were strikingly straightforward. This readiness in defining the deaf child contrasted with the meanderings of hearing professionals in exploring different constructs.

When describing deaf children Deaf professionals seemed to find an inner point of reference in themselves. As a resource they drew upon their own life experience, which included having unrealistic expectations placed upon them. An illuminating example was given by one of the Deaf teachers who talked about the auditory experience of deaf children. While hearing teachers debated the extent to which hearing amplification devices were of benefit, Deaf professionals offered explanations based solidly on their subjective experience. One teacher explained how deaf children would first need to learn

how to use residual hearing in order to benefit from hearing aids. Nevertheless, Deaf teachers felt the need to stress the importance of the natural visual experience of the child.

> If I had to tell someone, who does not know anything about deaf people, what is a deaf child like I would say that there is an important difference, that in many ways they are going to be like any other child, but because they are deaf they depend on visual input. They are going to learn how to use their residual hearing, implant... But what they have to start with is their sight. So we have to make sure that they see everything.
>
> (Bea. Deaf teacher)

This definition of deaf children's experience of aural experience is not dependent on the device or decibels, or frequencies. In contrast with the simplicity of the Deaf teacher's views, hearing teachers appeared to get caught up in fathoming out the scientific terminology and in effect this created a barrier between them and the child.

> Well, especially I would highlight that is a child ... he is deaf, he had a hearing impairment, he doesn't hear ... Then, every child is a different world, isn't it? There are children with implants, there are children who are hard of hearing, there are children that have a hearing impairment but with the hearing aids they can hear sounds that are deep, ...
>
> (Berta. Hearing teacher)

Deaf professionals offered information as to how the child would cope with his/her residual hearing and in the meantime, what the child would do to make sense of the world around him/her. This Deaf teacher insight was based on her self-experience as a Deaf person, who uses aural input to her advantage at times, but primarily constructs and makes sense of the world through visual channels.

This example brought up the sort of empathy that Deaf professionals expressed in regard to deaf children. Deaf professionals are better able to understand the deaf child as they have an inner point of reference. Some hearing professionals are well prepared to accept this reality:

> A Deaf person commented to me her experience of being taught by another Deaf person and she said: 'when I work with a Deaf person this person knows how I think, it feels as if he is inside of my head'. That sensation a Deaf person cannot have it with a hearing person, nor the hearing person with the Deaf person. That sensation of saying I know where to go...
>
> (Lola. Hearing teacher)

This common experience that Deaf professionals share with deaf children will put them in a much more favourable position to understand the child at school, monitor his/her school progress, identify feelings and understand their origin, and cater for their all round emotional well-being. A longer-term benefit is that the Deaf professional is able to put the experiences of the child in a lifetime perspective.

7.3.2. True normalisation: putting deaf children's life into perspective

The key dynamic that was identified in a Deaf professional testimony is the notion of projecting the child's individual experience into a lifespan perspective.

As we said in the previous section, Deaf professionals will have the chance of letting children know who they are. One of the definitions that a Deaf professional gave of a deaf pupil really reflected this ability to put the child's life into a lifespan perspective. As illustrated in the quotation below, one of the Deaf professionals described seeing not only the child in front of them, but also the deaf pupil, a deaf child, a deaf teenager, a deaf adult and a deaf elder. At the centre of the construct system there is '*a Deaf person*' in contrast to hearing teachers top construct *'a child'*.

This construction allows deaf children to be perceived as part of a social group, a community that at the time may not be very obvious but later in life will be of great significance for them. The Deaf community will be a forum where they will meet peers and will strengthen their feeling not only of self and but of a collective identity.

> I think that if, for example, a person comes [to the school] that does not know anything about deaf people I would tell them to find out what is it like to be deaf, get to know Deaf people. That is the most important, that is the priority. Who are deaf people? What are their capabilities? To understand deaf people as a group by getting inside the group … Their history, their language, to understand that they form part of a history of deaf people and they will grow up to be deaf adults and deaf people within the community.
>
> (Amaya. Deaf assistant)

From this it is clear that Deaf professionals do not 'borrow' hearing constructs and extend them. Their constructions of the deaf child are rooted in their own and their collective experience of cultural deafness.

7.3.3. Bridging hearing and Deaf views on what is a deaf child like?

As presented, Deaf professionals views are anchored in their personal cultural experience of being Deaf. What emerges in the school environment is a construction of the deaf child that is palatable to hearing professionals. From this emerges a relative context dependent definition. This can be seen explicitly in the following quotations which comments on the visual and auditory/oral experience of the child:

> If I had to tell someone, who does not know anything about deaf people, what is a deaf child like I would say that there is an important difference, that in many ways they are going to be like any other child, but because they are deaf they depend on visual input. They are going to learn how to use their residual hearing, implant… But what they have to start with is their sight. So we have to make sure that they see everything.
>
> (Bea. Deaf teacher)

Within the processes defined above, the Deaf professionals nevertheless attempted to accommodate to their hearing colleagues. The emergent definition attempted to integrate the views of some hearing professionals of the deaf child.

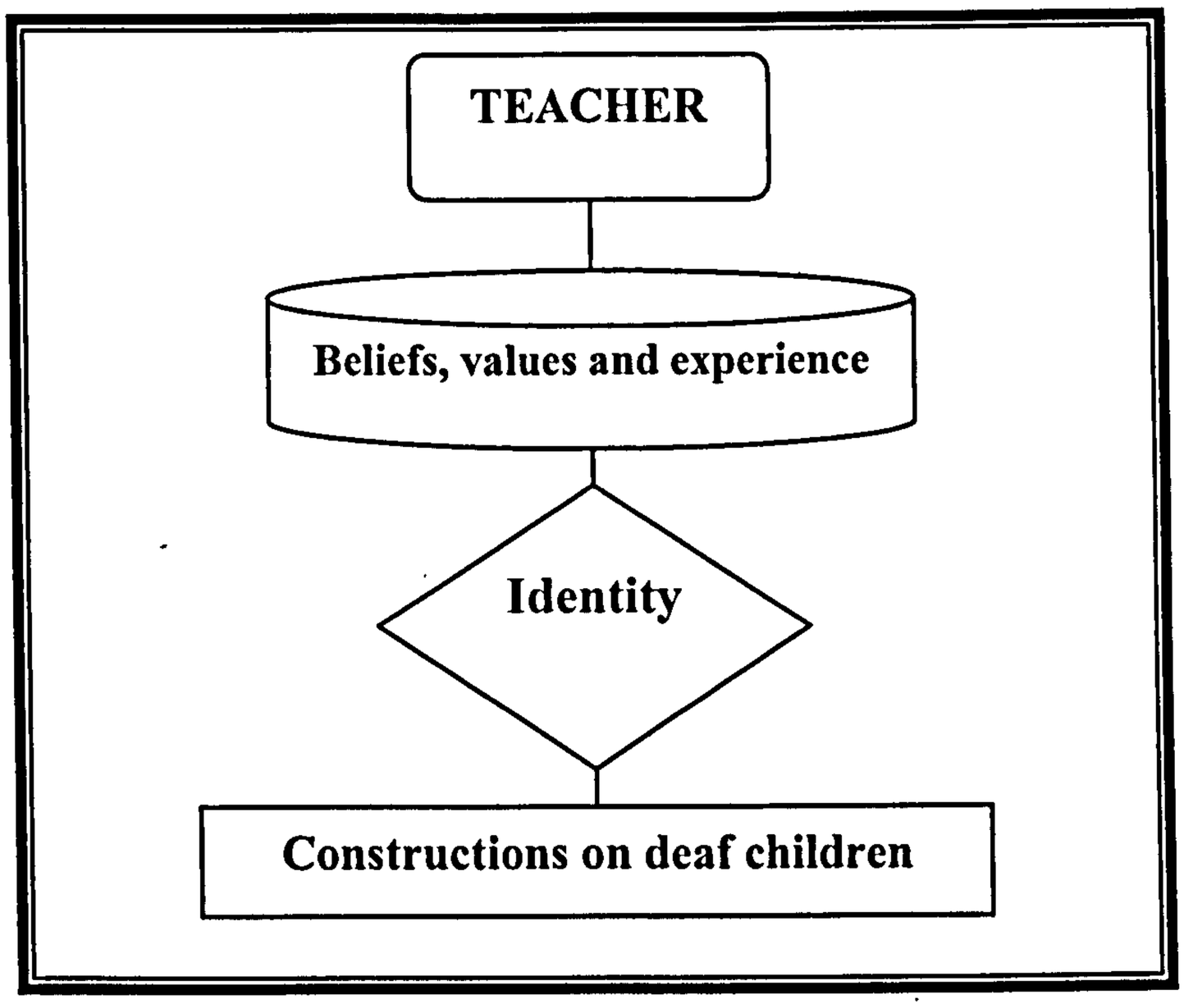
Deaf teachers are tackling directly the issues that challenge most hearing teachers: living visually with little or no hearing input. From this challenging idea, teachers as we have seen, try to explain how important visual input is, not wasting any chance to stress it once again.

Within this process Deaf adults could be viewed as representing the voices of deaf children whilst still putting their own experiences across. Deaf teachers try to bridge the gap between the hearing teachers and their deaf pupils, between two different ways of experiencing life, between society and a cultural minority group.

7.4. Constructing the notion of 'deaf pupil'

An analysis of the constructions as offered and explained by teachers in the focus groups suggests that Deaf and hearing teachers undergo similar processes in constructing the deaf child. In constructing the deaf pupil, teachers draw on their own experiences. Teachers look in their personal life experiences to make sense of the deaf child. The lens through which they will be looking will gather their life experience, their values and beliefs, forged along the years. It is through this reality that they are going to understand the deaf child and so, this accumulated knowledge serves as a guide for their interpretations of the child. The dynamic used by hearing and Deaf teachers is the same.

Figure 7. 2: Dynamic for constructing the deaf child



While the essence of the process of construct elaboration (see Figure 7.2) is similar for Deaf and hearing professionals, as it has been explained in previous sections, the content of these professionals' life experiences clearly differ significantly.

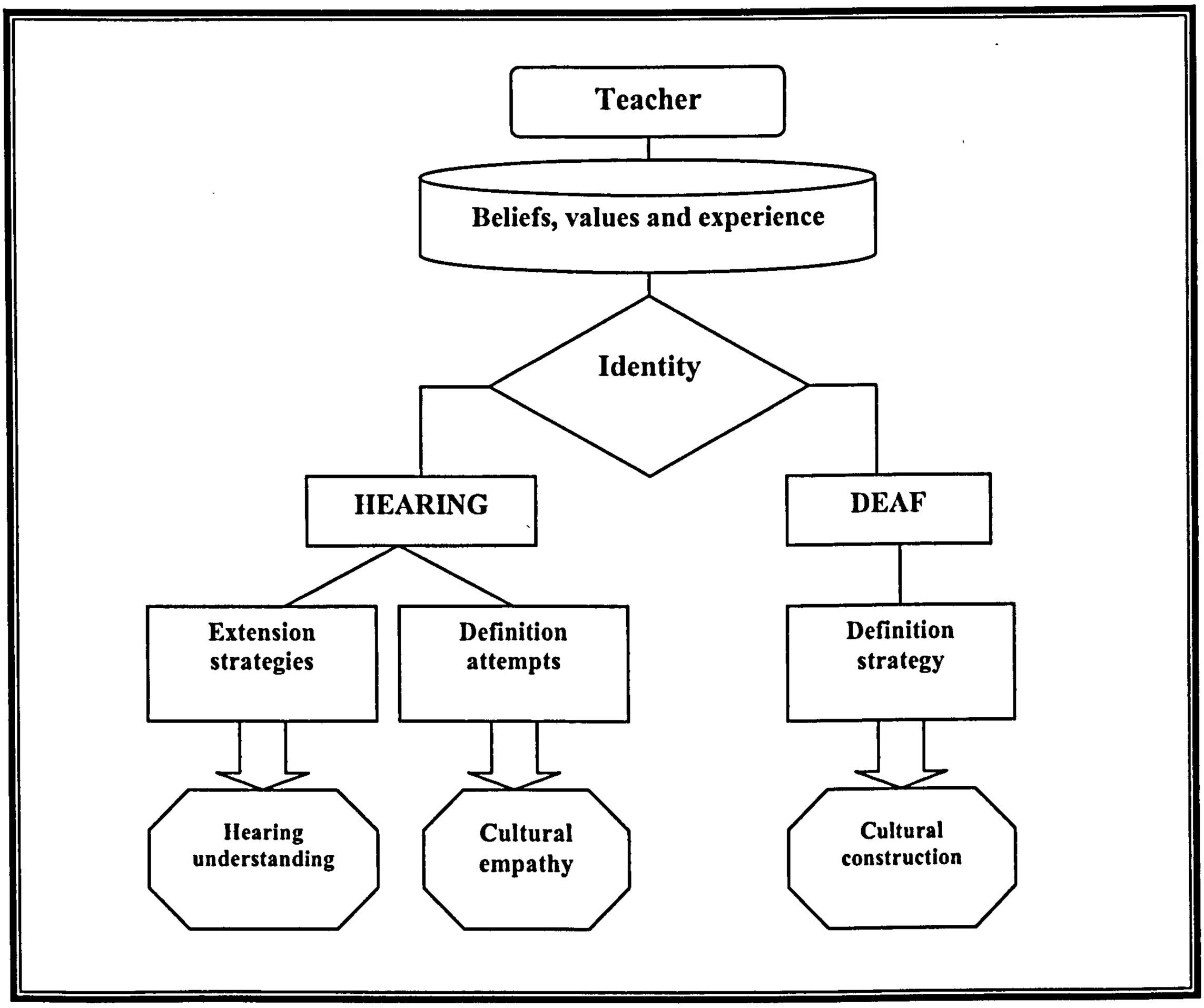
Hearing teachers perceive through a construct system which assumes the ability to hear. For them being hearing is not a salient trait of their identity. The ability to hear only assumes salience in the face of the absence of hearing, and so being deaf is not within their experience. They see, communicate, relate with deaf people, but they interpret the world through a hearing lens. What becomes clear is that hearing teachers become increasingly sensitive to a visual way of living through their exposure to Deaf culture.

In contrast, Deaf colleagues have experienced life visually and so construct the world in these terms. Being deaf is a salient trait of their identity particularly as most deaf people live surrounded by a majority of people who not only have an auditory/aural experience but for whom the ability to hear and speak is absolutely necessary (see Section 1.9). Being deaf is a central element of their cultural identity that will result in a different interpretation of life. For instance, faced with a hearing construction of deafness that incorporates the notion of disability and impairment, deaf people construct a cultural identity.

According to Kelly (1955; 1991), people interpret reality in a similar way if they are looking through similar construct systems, and not necessarily by being exposed to the same experiences. The analysis of hearing and Deaf professionals' constructions illustrated a fundamental difference in the lens through which the deaf child was perceived. Although hearing and Deaf life experiences of teachers will shape their interpretations, hearing and Deaf professionals put strategies in place to see the deaf child through each other's eyes. Hearing teachers try to see things from a culturally Deaf perspective. Similarly, Deaf professionals also bridge the cultural gap with their hearing colleagues by acknowledging the importance that hearing has for them and perceiving the potential value auditory experiences may have for deaf children, as presented in Section 7.3.3.

Teachers' attempts to look into the world through another person's eyes is especially important in the case of hearing teachers. Personal interaction necessitates perceiving the world through another person's construct system (Kelly,1955; 1991). In order to understand the deaf child, teachers need to look through the deaf child's eyes, in other words, through their construct systems. This helps teachers anticipate what children may be thinking or feeling. This sort of empathy is a prerequisite for a successful educational relationship (see Section 2.4.2). For this reason having access to Deaf professionals' way of thinking is of great significance to become closer to the deaf child. This exercise in cultural empathy will result in true easy access to the other's construct systems and so, to true communication (Kelly, 1955; 1991). Insight into deaf children's construct systems will allow teachers to 'relate appropriately', rather than not doing that. This may have a significant impact on deaf children's academic and psychological life (see Section 1.8.1). The focus groups allowed a snapshot to be taken of aspects involved in constructing deaf pupils.

Figure 7. 3: Teachers process of constructing 'deaf pupils'



As Figure 7.3 illustrates the values, beliefs and experience within which our identities as hearing and Deaf individuals are forged are determinant in the process of construct elaboration. While hearing teachers might be inclined to apply already elaborated constructs to represent deaf pupils, there is potential for them to develop definition of deaf pupil by coming closer to Deaf frameworks, Deaf identities and D/deaf people's constructions of the notion of 'deaf pupil'.

As well as influencing teaching practice, cultural empathy has effects on professional identity. Deaf and hearing teachers are different, have different life experiences (visual vs. audio/aural) and as a result, look into the deaf child through a different lens. When teachers try to see the child through the others' lens, this impacts on their professional identity. We may well see how the use of strategies to come closer to each other's experience, alters teachers' perspectives on the child but also on them as hearing teachers

of deaf pupils. This issue emerged quite strongly in the data. In doing this, hearing and Deaf professionals will be forced to negotiate their cultural identities.

7.5. Conclusion

An analysis of Deaf and hearing constructions of the notion of 'deaf pupil' have corroborated the significance that hearing and Deaf life experiences have in formulating definitions of deaf pupils. Deaf and hearing professionals were seen to undergo similar process to construct a notion of deaf pupil- those were, to refer to their inner point of reference as deaf and hearing individuals. Deaf and hearing identities (and construct systems) configured a lens through which their social and emotional experiences of making sense of one's experiences from a personal as well as cultural perspective, are gathered.

With this in mind, the Study in Chapter 8 offers hearing teachers a chance to gain insight into the deaf child by analysing scenarios with deaf pupils in school and considering Deaf professionals' interpretations of these same scenarios.

Chapter 8

Engaging with Deaf culture:

The evolution of professional roles - Study 4

8.1. Introduction

This chapter presents findings of the action research study (see Section 3.5.4) in which teachers were provided with Deaf cultural understanding of their role as teachers to provide an opportunity to shift from a hearing framework to a Deaf/visual perspective.

The methodological strategy followed in this study, which consisted of presenting hearing teachers with Deaf assistants' interpretations of their views was very useful for promoting a different understanding in teachers as well as for exploring teachers' feelings about Deaf representations of their role as teachers.

8.2. Recognition of culture

Throughout the discussion, teachers identified aspects of the education curriculum that resonated with the perceived cultural heritage of hearing children. Their discussions led to exploration of the suitability of the curriculum and, in this area teachers were keen to explore strengths and weaknesses, particularly with respect to its accessibility to deaf children. Certain aspects of the curriculum, clearly grounded in the experience of hearing children, provided an opportunity for teachers to reflect on the fundamental difference between a Deaf and hearing child's experience of life. In the teacher's experience much of the curriculum was simply not meaningful to deaf children, as these quotations illustrate:

> If we translate a riddle into sign language, it is obvious even to a baby! ... Just the other day we were doing an activity where the children were shown three objects: a walnut, a bottle and a "roscon de reyes[1]". I had to give them clues as to what object we were talking about. The clue was: 'a box that the teacher opens' {in Sign Language doing the box as the shell of a walnut}, so it was obvious - they could see it! So, often we make everything too visual, too concrete.
>
> How do you explain a riddle?! I can explain the meaning of it, but you can't make a riddle accessible to the child... for instance for 'en abril aguas mil[2]' we have a picture in the book that has the page of the calendar that shows April and raindrops. The children were saying to me: 'Rain,

[1] 'Roscón de Reyes': Popular Christmas cake that hides a small present inside eaten in Spain.

[2] April showers.

> rain, ...' and I was thinking 'yes of course it's rain but the raindrops symbolise water so it's *water*". And Teresa {Deaf assistant} was explaining it to them in sign language and the explanation was right but when we said the riddle the meaning was meaningless for the children and we had to explain it again...sometimes I say, 'OK let's skip the riddles!'
>
> (Paula)

Teachers' concern was that even when delivered in sign language, certain concepts lost meaning. Riddles may be a tool that allows children to play with sounds in a literary way or create awareness of words that sound the same. Teachers observed that deaf children simply could not make sense of a literal interpretation of a riddle even if delivered in sign language.

Face to face with a tension between mainstream curriculum and traditional teaching tools, teachers reported negative and frustrating experiences, not only for themselves but also for the deaf pupils. Effectively, teachers found themselves immersing deaf children in learning opportunities that were unconnected to their experiences. Clearly one result of this situation was that deaf pupils were more likely to fail to fulfil teachers' expectations. Teachers were also aware of the detrimental effects these experiences were likely to have on the deaf child's sense of self – on their confidence and expectations.

Teachers' belief was that they needed to be able to make more explicit the difference between Deaf and hearing life experience, and only when this could take place would teachers be in a position to mediate between Deaf and hearing frameworks of understanding. Once deaf children were aware that riddles were a hearing construction, and they had the chance to become familiar with riddles, they would be in a position to understand them, and even use them as an aspect of hearing culture:

> What we need to do is to explain to them that this is something that hearing people do. For instance, when we get to a riddle or a comparison... e.g. 'he has eyes as round as...' and they give you answers that you feel have no poetry or aren't funny, it's better to just tell them 'this idiom goes like this: 'he has eyes as round as plates' and they think about it and they also don't find it funny but you have to just tell them: 'hearing people when we talk we say that, ok? And in sign language you say other things to express the same ideas'. By doing this they get used to idioms and then if they find them in a text, they know the meaning and where those meaningless metaphors come from!
>
> (Marta)

Teachers described being more than passive observers but took a role in relation to the material, in effect acting as cultural mediators. The classroom was therefore understood to be a forum for the negotiation of different cultural frameworks of understanding, with respect to the curriculum.

8.3. Understanding culture in teaching practice

The role of Deaf culture in teaching practice was explored through using the experiences of Deaf assistants. As outlined in Chapter 3, key themes emerging from focus groups were discussed with Deaf assistants, and in turn Deaf assistants' responses informed subsequent discussions with teachers. Full details on the methodology can be found in Section 3.7.4, but the strength of this approach was in highlighting the *process* by which teachers came to maintain certain perspectives rather than simply the beliefs they reported. Teachers demonstrated tensions and contradictions in describing the role of culture in the classroom, at times appearing to meander around opposing standpoints. What they describe can be understood as the process of deconstructing and constructing their beliefs about culture and its relation to their role as teachers.

Although teachers were aware of the potential tensions between Deaf and hearing cultural frameworks, they were not immediately clear as to how this impacted on teaching processes and relationships in the classroom. For example when asked to consider cultural bias in specific subjects, they failed to see how these cultural differences affected subjects such as Maths.

Deaf assistants on the other hand were clear that sharing cultural identity with deaf children meant they brought experience into the classroom that was fundamentally different from that which hearing teachers could bring. In turn, their way of thinking and of constructing ideas provided a natural connection between teacher and learner, and mediated the learning experience. Deaf assistants could identify points of divergence between Deaf and hearing experiences that hindered deaf pupils' learning. One example of this was an observation that hearing teachers used examples from their own lives to try to make contents relevant to their deaf pupils. Deaf assistants felt that children would find it hard to make any connection to their own experience, because examples they gave often stressed the difference in their experience of life. Deaf children could not see themselves in the examples used, and so teaching material became more abstract, and the connection between teacher and pupil, more distant. Clearly this had implications for pupils' understanding as well as for the connection between hearing teacher and deaf pupil. In this respect, Deaf teachers were different from hearing teachers and the divergence between Deaf and hearing experiences of life was observed by Deaf assistants particularly as being central to the educational relationship between deaf pupils and their hearing teachers.

When fed back to teachers, these observations, essentially a Deaf perspective on making the curriculum meaningful, produced tentative agreement. Hearing teachers acknowledged that the differing experiences of Deaf and hearing professionals influenced their understanding of deaf children:

> In subjects like CM[3]... we were talking about agriculture...what the farmer does. It's true that you immediately think 'they plough, they sow'... and a Deaf teacher, maybe thinks 'what does the farmer do? This. And then? This. And then?' And the outcome is more like a film, more visual. The hearing teacher refers to it from an audio/oral point of view, creating the typical phrases that you want the child to remember ...a Deaf person would role play it more."
>
> (Marta)

Hearing teachers reflected on the fact that their teaching methods incorporated ways of learning and understanding that were more oriented to hearing than to deaf pupils. In effect, they explored how strategies they employed could be reproducing their own ways of learning (i.e. remembering facts using their auditory memory). In contrast, hearing teachers acknowledged that Deaf teachers might be inclined to create a more visual learning experience for the deaf child. From hearing teachers' perspective Deaf teachers were delivering the same contents but in a visual-narrative form.

While teachers acknowledged situations in which being Deaf or hearing had a direct impact on teaching methods, there was some reluctance to accept these patterns. In one example, difference in teaching style was put down to individual difference:

> But it doesn't depend if the person is deaf or not - surely my example about a topic has nothing to do with the examples that any of you could offer because all of you have your own experiences, as I have.
>
> (Sol)

Believing that differences in teaching methods resulted from hearing status was an idea that was treated with some caution, with teachers often preferring the safety of familiar explanations of individual difference. The process of deconstructing teachers' beliefs revealed certain patterns. Essentially teachers' 'learning' about difference was based on the following cycle: being exposed to alternative approaches, identifying with them, and returning to slightly altered but essentially familiar beliefs.

In order to get inside this cycle, and gain clearer insight as to the implications of constructing learning from hearing and Deaf standpoints, Deaf assistants were asked what it would take for hearing teachers to hold a 'Deaf-led' perspective. Essentially Deaf assistants were asked what, if anything, could bridge the gap in hearing teachers' practice in the classroom to deliver the curriculum from a Deaf standpoint.

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[3] CM stands for 'Conocimiento del Medio', this subject is a combination of geography and history.

Without exception Deaf assistants described the ability to connect with deaf pupils as the single most important factor in effective teaching. In order to achieve this goal, Deaf assistants believed hearing teachers needed to establish solid contact with the community. Getting to know a wide range of D/deaf people was thought to be fundamental to an 'insider' understanding of Deaf culture. To achieve this, teachers needed to watch Deaf peoples' stories, and witness their views, ideas and how they felt. Only this degree of social and cultural exposure would allow hearing professionals to internalise Deaf values, beliefs and behaviour, and to build constructive relationships with deaf children. Deaf assistants' views were that teachers' contact with deaf pupils in school, and with Deaf adults only occasionally outside work was not enough to 'come close' to the experience of being Deaf. In order to get closer, teachers' engagement in Deaf associations was essential – environments in which they would be able to meet Deaf people in their own environments. Deaf assistants' experience was that few hearing teachers were prepared to make this level of commitment.

Teachers responded to this observation with remarkable openness. They acknowledged that achieving insight into the deaf child's experience was something that represented both a personal and collective struggle. Teachers were attracted by the prospect of being able to bridge the gap between their hearing perspectives and a Deaf standpoint, if somewhat overwhelmed by the challenge. The prospect of improving their teaching practice certainly generated a degree of enthusiasm.

From their discussion, teachers identified three areas that would improve their level of insight into the experience of being Deaf:

1) Familiarity with sign language
2) More contact with Deaf people
3) Teacher's personal qualities

8.3.1. Familiarity with sign language

Sign language was not the first language of the teachers in the group and while all teachers in the study used signing to communicate with children, they did not consider their signing skills as adequate. Teachers believed that communicating with pupils in a language that was not their own had a significant impact on their teaching.

In turn, teachers considered a good command of sign language the most important means of understanding deaf pupils and of improving the quality of teaching.

In order to teach in what was their second or third language, they described their need for further training. In the absence of further training, they turned to the Deaf assistant as a linguistic resource:

> Marta: ...when I'm teaching and Sandra {Deaf assistant} is in the classroom I improve considerably. I teach in sign language and Sandra corrects me when she thinks there are other ways of expressing more efficiently what I want to say ... I am certain I would be able to explain in greater depth if I was using spoken Spanish.
>
> Sol: ..Sign language is not your language so you're lacking resources to express yourself fully...you're limited to saying it in one way, whereas in spoken Spanish you're able to say it in different ways.
>
> Marta: But you can only say it in one way because we don't know how to say it in a different way, in a better way.
>
> Sol: Yes of course, because it is not our language so it's either that or... that. We have no other linguistic resources in sign language that we know.

Teachers had strong reactions to Deaf assistants' views on language. Deaf assistants' portrayal of sign language as a language embedded in a Deaf experience of life was enlightening to teachers, as was their belief that skill in sign language necessitated adopting a visual perspective in presenting information to pupils.

In a more general sense, teachers began to consider the relationship between being hearing and sign language. More significantly as discussions progressed they began to explore the possibility of developing their language skills to become more visual/Deaf:

> A very good level of sign language is essential to facilitate a change in perspective. You don't attain certain levels of sign language without being able to step into the shoes of Deaf people. You can learn signs, you can learn the theoretical background to the language, the structure... but you reach a point where either you internalise all of that and you're able to switch from your view to a Deaf person's view and speak "as a Deaf person" would or you have reached your threshold ...so it's necessary to experience life in the Deaf community as well as training in the language itself.
>
> (Sol)

Increasingly, teachers could see that using sign language within a hearing framework did not allow qualitative progression in the language and so in their teaching.

Teachers offered several examples of hearing people who had had contact with sign language, but still struggled really to acquire the language themselves:

> Well, I am just thinking right now of people that have done stage 1, 2 and they reach stage 3 and they are constantly asking why things are signed in a certain way... you realise that it's just because of that... they haven't been able to shift perspective, they haven't changed the lens... they haven't really achieved the objectives of sign language. Because by the time you reach stage 4 ...you need to have made that shift in perspective.
>
> (Marta)

Teachers started to appreciate how learning sign language offered not only a means to provide the pupil with meaningful information, but also offered hearing teachers exciting and challenging opportunities to capture reality in a visual way:

> ...the other day I was trying to explain a story. In the story some birds were building a nest inside a tree trunk to shelter from the rain. So I went on explaining that in sign language. Sandra started signing the same story and suddenly she was inside of the tree trunk signing the rain outside! I was signing "HERE BETTER TO PROTECT OURSELVES BECAUSE WE ARE WARM - BETTER..." but she was inside! I was explaining that they were warm, but she was really protecting herself from the rain and feeling warm and cosy inside of the tree trunk!
>
> (Marta)

In summary sign language was associated with a switch from a hearing framework to a Deaf framework. Progress in the language meant being able to get into the shoes of D/deaf people, to see and construct life through their eyes. In turn, not being able to see life through D/deaf peoples' eyes limited the command of the language and also limited teachers' ability to achieve meaningful communication with pupils.

8.3.2. Social experience

When talking about achieving insight into Deaf people's way of thinking, hearing and Deaf professionals were in agreement that contact with Deaf people was the main resource. Beyond simply representing a 'communicator', teachers saw the Deaf person as someone that could guide them in seeing life in a different light, effectively allowing them to see life through Deaf eyes:

> When you are talking with Pablo {Deaf teacher} you pay attention to what he's saying, but also you observe how he's saying what he's saying. Not only the structure that he might be using to communicate the message, but in the way he is constructing something that he has lived to share it with you. We might have captured the same experience and expressed it in a very different way.
>
> (Sol)

Deaf assistants expressed a little more caution, believing that it would take a long time for hearing teachers to achieve both an adequate level of insight into deaf

pupils' lives and real familiarity in Deaf-led environments. There was a strong sense that Deaf assistants were key in the teaching process. With this in mind, Deaf assistants suggested that the introduction of more Deaf professionals in schools would significantly change the situation by giving hearing teachers opportunities to socialise in Deaf culture. For teachers, the value of Deaf assistants was also in being able to learn about children's beliefs and behaviour and in this sense they were regarded as cultural mediators, passing on information about Deaf culture to teachers. This role was valued particularly in avoiding culture clashes as this example illustrates:

> Paula: What I know about Deaf culture and deaf children I have discovered when working at the school...For instance the struggle to get them into line after break time. At the beginning it was an obsession and then one day I said to myself, 'but don't you realise they can't see the child behind them so they can't sign to each other,... hearing children can speak to each other on their way into the classroom but these children need to turn themselves around in order to sign to each other. They need to share what is going on in their lives, what they are thinking about and so on' ... and I said to myself: 'I'll leave them alone! Let them walk to class without keeping lines'.
>
> Researcher: Did working with a Deaf assistant help you in any way?
>
> Paula: Yes, of course. This example, it was actually Teresa {Deaf assistant} that opened my eyes. One day she said to the children: 'Get into line because if not she gets upset' and I then asked myself, wait a minute... do they have to be in a line because I get upset or because they need to learn to walk in order in a line? [laughing]... talking about this with her I realised, I said she's absolutely right, I'd never thought about it in that way...things that she says or her facial expressions - I realise when I am making those sorts of mistakes. She is really helpful for me.

Deaf assistants not only fed information about the child's experience, but most significantly, as one teacher pointed out, they offered hearing teachers an inner point of reference as to how deaf pupils might be constructing learning experiences:

> Lucía: What Sandra gives me is the inner reference in the mind of the deaf child, something that's not very clear to me.
>
> Marta: Yes, that's right, the way in which the deaf child perceives the things that we are teaching...
>
> Lucía: ...the inner reference for the deaf child, how they perceive things, because I'm sure it's different. She gives me that.

Deaf children themselves were also seen as cultural informants, helping teachers to modify their perspective. Teachers clearly had reservations about using this channel of information however:

I think that working with deaf pupils changes you in a way. The first year that you work with deaf pupils you face all these cultural clashes: these children don't know how to get in line, why aren't they looking to me when I sign, ... and then, depending on individuals' mental flexibility, you get to know all these things. Even if you have no contact outside the school with other deaf people, you find out by getting to know the children in the school. It would be much better if teachers went to the Deaf club, so that they could see how things were dealt with...how they tell stories, manage environments and so on...but even if teachers don't go they would eventually find out all these cultural codes.

(Marta)

Deaf assistants, too, expressed reservations about using children as a source of knowledge about culture, instead suggesting that contacts needed to be made with Deaf adults in order to find out about Deaf people's experience.

While useful information about Deaf culture as well as deaf children's development could be obtained through theoretical courses about e.g. the sociology of the Deaf community or more experienced colleagues in the school, it was clear that working in close contact with Deaf professionals represented the optimal source of support.

In summary, hearing teachers clearly had difficulties in establishing an accurate understanding of deafness from which to construct meaningful relationships with pupils. Coming closer to the experience of Deaf people by socialising with Deaf assistants supported hearing teachers in understanding more about the child. Crucially this represented a learning need and area of development for teachers.

8.3.3. Teachers' personal qualities

The third area that teachers considered essential in understanding deaf pupils was hearing teachers' personal qualities.

Making the most of social contact with Deaf people was thought to be influenced by the personal qualities and abilities of the teachers, specifically by teachers' flexibility, open-mindedness, respectfulness and willingness to listen to others' points of views without imposing their own:

...People need to pay more attention to others in general, they need to be aware of their own attitudes and of their ability to relate to others. Language is essential but other personal qualities count too – being respectful to others, Deaf or hearing, but with Deaf people it's even more important.

(Lucía)

In justifying their beliefs, teachers drew on other experiences in their lives in which they had been culturally alienated. One teacher drew a parallel with the need to acquire cultural empathy with people living in Catalonia. Acknowledging that it was a difficult task, there was recognition that being immersed in a different cultural group could facilitate an insider understanding and with an open mind, empathy could eventually be achieved:

> Marta: I think that if you go to live in another country for many years, that's what happens in the end.
>
> Sol: But it has to be a really long period of time... we're talking about a complete immersion in another culture.
>
> Marta: Yes a true cultural immersion.
>
> Paula: But the issue here is that as a hearing teacher you go to the Deaf club and when you come out of the club you are again in your hearing environment. I mean, when you go to another country, let's say China and you are in China from dawn to dusk. That is a real cultural immersion.
>
> Marta: Of course, when I moved to Catalonia, in my first year everything was strange. Seeing how they lived, and the things that Catalonian people did for their land/country, their beaches do not belong to the city council, the beaches belong to them, it's the same with the mountains, and they clean them and take care of them and they campaign and everybody goes there. And I remember, I said to myself 'we would never clean the beaches, with all the taxes that we are paying'. You arrive there with a different way of thinking. And then at the end of my three years there I really believed those things. It took me three years to be Catalonian. My partner was there three years and never got to be Catalonian. It must be that I am more flexible.

The ability to be open minded and flexible was awarded great importance, and it was these personal qualities that lay at the heart of the ability to develop a Deaf/visual perspective.

In summary, teachers became progressively aware of the implications teaching of deaf children within a Deaf cultural perspective. Developing a Deaf/visual standpoint demanded not only the use of sign language, but openness and flexibility in teachers.

8.4. Role models

In considering the three elements that teachers considered necessary to adopt a more Deaf/visual standpoint in order to understand the deaf child, what teachers described was the need for a role model in order to guide them in establishing meaningful relationships with deaf children.

In teachers' eyes, hearing adults with Deaf parents demonstrated comfortable integration of the three elements associated with a change of perspective (i.e. command in sign language, contact with Deaf people and openness/flexibility). Being raised in a Deaf family meant early exposure to sign language, as well as to Deaf social and cultural beliefs/behaviour. Growing up in a Deaf-led environment also put them in a privileged position in relating to deaf children.

With life experience that allowed a natural insight into Deaf people's experiences, hearing adults with Deaf parents had tools to construct learning relationships in a qualitatively different way from hearing teachers:

> Marta: I am just thinking now about hearing children of Deaf parents, with native sign language... I think that he or she wouldn't face the problems that we do because they're used to life in a Deaf environment, and have seen it from birth.
>
> Researcher: Yes, but then what you are suggesting is that it is an issue related more with the child experience in a Deaf environment than with the language itself...?
>
> Marta: I believe that it really is a matter of language proficiency and of experience in Deaf environment, of both things.
>
> Sol: I think that having good sign language skills gives you confidence to teach more fluently.
>
> Marta: Yes, but yet again it's about experience... hearing children of Deaf parents understand the issues related to deaf children's experiences but those things I don't know because I haven't lived them. The deaf child of Deaf parents is used to the way Deaf people live, how they move, the appropriate distance in interactions, how you interrupt a conversation... these sorts of things that no matter how many sign language courses you enrol in, if you don't live with Deaf people you'll never get to learn. That's my experience. A native sign language user has a great advantage. Things that for them are obvious, for me they're still not.

Deaf professionals agreed that most hearing adults with Deaf parents were in a better position to understand the deaf child, as a result of being in contact with Deaf culture from birth. Hearing children brought up in Deaf environments were also able to refer to their parents' points of view, ideas, experience, ways of interacting and delivering information, and knew how to relate to others in a Deaf environment. Effectively both hearing and deaf people raised in Deaf environments had a Deaf inner point of reference that allowed them to communicate with, but more importantly understand, deaf people. What became increasingly clear was that the notion of teachers' cultural identity particularly in relation to Deaf assistants was becoming increasingly salient.

8.5. 'Secondary socialisation' in Deaf culture: negotiating identities

In considering the importance of a Deaf perspective, namely the Deaf assistants' role, in managing Deaf environments, teachers were beginning to explore the process of secondary socialisation in Deaf culture (e.g. learning sign language, socialising with Deaf adults, and role models) and how it related to their experience.

In acknowledging the need for a perceptual "shift" (see Section 8.3), discussion moved to how this shift might come about and particularly whether it should be motivated by personal or professional factors. Fundamentally this discussion grew out the role of teachers' own identities. On the whole, teachers believed that theirs was essentially a professional commitment, however discussion illuminated complex links between personality and professional beliefs. As this quote identifies, it was complicated to establish a clear-cut separation between teachers' personal and professional lives:

> ... aside from professional engagement there is also a personal engagement. If you don't have the initial interest to become that type of professional, and you don't really care ... I don't think you can actually say: Now I am the teacher, and now I am the person. The two go together.
>
> (Lucía)

As hearing people who had "discovered" the Deaf community, they had developed an increasingly stronger professional interest in Deaf culture and the community. Their professional engagement and experiences with Deaf people cultivated their personal self, as illustrated below:

> What can be a greater personal commitment than acquiring a professional commitment that involves training in their language and in their culture and to deliver that in the classroom later on!
>
> (Marta)

Negotiations between teachers' personal and professional identities illustrated the emotional implications and tension that secondary socialisation had for teachers. The following section explores this negotiation between personal and professional persona in more depth.

8.5.1. Teachers' resistance

While demonstrating some commitment to the need for secondary socialisation, teachers faced resistance within themselves as they began to explore their own multiple identities.

In acknowledging their professional identity, teachers were keen to pursue more meaningful engagement with Deaf people and Deaf culture. Professionally, teachers looked forward to being 'encultured' and envisaged achieving this to a

similar degree as hearing adults with Deaf parents did. However for many, this desire was in conflict with their personal identity, which was rooted in a lifestyle oriented to other hearing people, as this example illustrates:

> ...in my free time I don't feel like doing things related to work. In my free time I don't feel like receiving parents' calls, to check what we did in maths today... In general terms, as a teacher, educating someone else's children, it's a big commitment to parents. But, I do not feel like giving up any of my week-ends to go on a camp with my family, my children and our deaf pupils because it is my space, my time, my life. From Monday to Friday I belong to the school and if I have to put in some more time I do put it in, and if a parent needs to contact me it's alright, but Saturdays and Sundays are mine.
>
> (Marta)

As their professional and personal identities were tied up with two different cultural groups – Deaf and hearing, this situation necessitated making choices in order to achieve a balance between their professional and personal life. A strong theme throughout the discussion was that however committed teachers were to the principles of secondary socialisation, their experience of the process made them feel that limitations were being imposed on their personal life:

> It's hard to believe that those teachers only went once to the club for that particular event. I guess they've been several times. But, I'm sure they have their own reasons - each of us has our own lives, and the ladies may well have children and can't afford to go out all afternoon to the club. By going two hours they are showing that they're doing what they can.
>
> (Sol)

For teachers, the need to maintain a personal life rooted in the hearing world could be seen as an obstacle in the context of their working life, which depended on involvement with the Deaf community:

> It might be a bit radical but I believe that from the moment that you're hearing you will never be able to belong to the Deaf community...they have their Deaf identity and you have your hearing identity and no matter how much you may want to commit personally and professionally, you're a hearing person and you have a community of your own. You might go to the Deaf community, to their associations, to the Deaf camps, lobby for services... but you're a hearing person. Your own business in the hearing world will always be more important than the Deaf community, just because you are a hearing person.
>
> (Sol)

For other teachers being hearing meant that their membership of the Deaf community was inevitably compromised, although not necessarily completely, as this quote illustrates:

> I don't believe that a community is reduced to simply whether you're hearing or not... what happens then with hearing parents of deaf children, do they belong to the Deaf community? And what about the hearing children of Deaf parents? ... the Deaf community is bigger than that... of course the degree to which I belong to the community is going to be

> different but everybody brings to the community what they can and not everybody can give a 100%.
>
> (Marta)

For teachers, their hearing identity emerged as the main focus of resistance to secondary socialisation. As hearing people, teachers did not feel confident that they were willing, nor even able to offer the commitment necessary to maintain a more permanent relationship with the Deaf community.

8.5.2. Teachers' experience of rejection and feeling threatened

While teachers demonstrated resistance to the idea of secondary socialisation, achieving an inner point of reference in understanding deaf children was a powerful motivation for teachers to remain open to a deeper relationship with the Deaf community. The dilemma facing teachers was that further involvement in the Deaf community either came at the cost of their personal life or compromised the quality of their teaching. This dilemma had an impact on teachers emotionally in several ways. While rationally teachers broadly supported the need for more Deaf awareness, on a more irrational and emotional level teachers felt under attack, and felt particularly that the Deaf community was making demands on them for greater involvement and in effect criticising their teaching. Teachers also felt these demands represented an intrusion into their personal lives.

> What do they want? For us to be constantly with them, only be with Deaf people and become part of Deaf culture, always be surrounded with Deaf people?...do they want us to stop being hearing people and have hearing friends, is it just them that are important in the world? Is that the only way of becoming part of the Deaf community? I think it's very selfish.
>
> (Paula)

Maintaining a balance between professional and personal was often described as a political issue, something that could end up with teachers being excluded from the community as seen below:

> Sol: Why can't they understand that we need to be with hearing people,... we understand their needs, that they need to come together to share what has been going on during the day. But Friday comes and they can't understand that we as hearing people we can't be with them all day long.
>
> Marta: They may well understand you but that will exclude you from the community

On the one hand, teachers struggled to find a balance within themselves, that is between fulfilling their interests as professionals and maintaining their other commitments in the hearing community. On the other hand, they perceived demands and expectations from the Deaf community to show a stronger

engagement with the community. The effect of the latter effectively decreased their motivation by making teachers feel rejected and excluded.

8.5.3. Teachers' low confidence and anxiety

Deaf assistants were given an opportunity to comment on this process. To Deaf assistants, obstacles for hearing teachers in committing time to the Deaf community were very real. However assistants were also able to see first hand the need really to connect with the child in order to provide quality education and they expected teachers to be interested in supporting the child in this way. Their strength of feeling can be seen in their response to questions as to whether university training for hearing teachers should formalise the need for socialisation experiences in the community. Their response was that training in Deaf socialisation should be awarded the same status as other areas. This would be the only way pressure could be exerted on teachers to acquire a good level of insight into deaf pupils and ultimately improve education standards.

Hearing teachers acknowledged that the Deaf community's pressures on them to engage in Deaf culture could be a reflection of the responsibility that Deaf people felt for educating deaf children. Teachers acknowledged that in a professional sense, they too shared this responsibility and the goal- to provide quality education to deaf children. However perhaps unlike Deaf assistants, teachers sometimes struggled to know how best to facilitate, particularly in a way which did not represent personal sacrifice to them. The effect of listening to Deaf assistants was to reinstate this goal as something very positive and of huge potential impact to children. Recognising their commitment to achieving this goal also had the effect of reducing their emotional reaction to feeling pressurised by Deaf people into offering this commitment:

> ...if you have more experience and you get to know the Community, you can make better connections with the children, although I find it very difficult.
>
> (Sol)

Overall teachers still maintained caution as to whether it was possible really to feel for themselves how life was for Deaf people, as illustrated below:

> ... It is very difficult. First of all you need a lot of time that unfortunately we don't have, and we already have an overload of work... so you have to prioritise, even if it's hard to do. You need to put your priorities in order. If you have your own family, your family will go first. Other things in your life are going to be more of a priority for you than going to the Deaf club. You could go there once a week, once a month, depending on your responsibilities. It would help you a lot in you work... but because of our own circumstances sometimes we can't. Either you are a Deaf person or

by the time you can empathise with the pupils and understand them, a long time has gone by. You need a lot of time and personally I think that even with all the time in the world I still wouldn't be able to do it.

(Sol)

Paula: It's understandable that they {Deaf community} have that doubt with respect to Deaf values... do we really internalise them... do we know them? I think it's very difficult to internalise those values really. You can know them, you can take them into account, but internalising them... only if you are really into the thing ... it's a life experience for the Deaf person, and even if you can get into their shoes, you're never going to be able to feel how their life is.

Marta: It's takes immersion in that situation and if you don't have it, it's very difficult. You can learn the language, you can get to know the values and try to remember them to understand situation, to respect them... but live their values, I think that really comes with the life experience, and if you haven't lived it... I don't think you can achieve it.

In spite of the obvious difficulties of undergoing a second socialisation process in another culture, and of the obvious limitations that hearing teachers had as members of a different community, some teachers were still keen to face this professional challenge. A clear obstacle was teachers' confidence, which was low with respect to achieving any level of real insight into deaf people's lives. Teachers perceived themselves to be outsiders in the Deaf community, and with this acknowledgement came often intense emotion e.g. anxiety and uncertainty:

Marta: For a long time now I've been thinking that I should go at least once a week to the Deaf club. It wouldn't take much for me to organise myself and my family to go. I don't go because I don't know anybody and just going there like that ...it's too much...

Sol: Well if you want we can get together and both of us go to the club. I know one of the teachers and maybe in this way we can start making friendships (laughing in sarcasm). It's too complicated, first because of our time-tables and secondly because no matter how willing and interested you are in going, you're a hearing person and you can't avoid it. You can't say 'now I'm going to go the Deaf club to be Deaf, now I'll go to my normal life and will be hearing'.

Throughout these discussions, teachers realised that the responsibility for socialising in Deaf culture lay within themselves but that they were often put off by anxieties associated with making the first move, particularly from their position as outsiders.

8.5.4. Teachers' experience of feeling supported

Teachers sought ways to alleviate the pressure generated by acknowledging their responsibility in the process of socialising in Deaf culture but not feeling confident to act on it. One effect of teachers' anxieties was that they avoided a situation with risks attached. It became increasingly evident that secondary

socialisation was something that was influenced more by teachers' emotional state of mind than by their interest or availability. With this in mind, teachers looked to others to share this responsibility. As Deaf assistants proposed, teachers also considered making contact with the Deaf community a legal obligation for hearing teachers, not only before teaching deaf children but at different points in their teaching career:

> I think that when you start working in a school like this one you arrive with a general background of education from the university. There should a sabbatical leave during training for those professionals... [to acquire] sign language...a more holistic training is needed. This could be done by going for three months to work in Deaf clubs in your working hours. And there you could learn to live together with Deaf people, and then come back to the school...not only once in your life but later on in your professional life too, as part of professional retraining programmes. In my case, alright, I have finished my Sign Language training and I'm an interpreter now... but if I don't practise with Deaf people I lose my proficiency...
>
> (Lucía)

The Deaf community itself could also support this approach by providing teachers with activities that would necessitate immersion with Deaf people. Teachers proposed camps not only to improve sign language skills but also to allow strong and potentially long-term relationships with Deaf people to emerge, and to see how Deaf people cope on a day-to-day level with living in a hearing world.

> Researcher: How could we achieve that socialisation in Deaf groups?
>
> Marta: We could do cultural immersions in the same way we do for English camps, we could do sign language camps, where we could all practise and learn sign language.
>
> Researcher: But is it just a matter of sign language skills...?
>
> Marta: No, but that's a start...
>
> Researcher: Sign language could be the excuse...
>
> Marta: On the pretext of learning more sign language you would be with Deaf people.
>
> Sol: That's how you'd attract hearing professionals...people would think, "we are going to a Deaf camp to practise sign language".
>
> Paula: ...and then you'd realise how they get on during lunch time conversations...
>
> Lucía: How they call each others' attention...

Although teachers identified these mechanisms by which to facilitate learning about Deaf people they expressed some caution as to how easy it might be to implement them.

8.5.5. Teacher's frustration and sadness

Setting up secondary socialisation experiences was understood by teachers to constitute a complicated process necessitating both practical and emotional resources. In the face of such barriers, teachers searched for a more straightforward alternative and in some frustration suggested that perhaps only Deaf people could become teachers of the deaf:

> Lucía: After this session I feel really frustrated. I think everything will be solved when the majority of teachers of deaf pupils are Deaf ... really ... there's no other way...
>
> Marta: Yes, but maybe the day will come when there'll be hearing and Deaf teachers and everything will be alright.
>
> Sol: But there has to be a higher proportion of Deaf teachers.
>
> Marta: Of course, many more than hearing teachers.
>
> Lucía: Yes, many, many, many more.

They also focused on the benefits of using hearing adults with Deaf parents:

> I am now thinking about interpreters that are hearing children of Deaf families. I'm sure that they make fewer mistakes than we do, because they have always been in Deaf environments, they know how to manage them,...
>
> (Marta)

At this point, it could be said that teachers had realised not only the importance of developing a visual/Deaf point of view in teaching practice, but most significantly the obstacles in achieving this, not least the emotional impact that achieving that level of insight would mean for them. Teachers, who at the beginning of discussions thought that personal and professional commitments were difficult to separate, were now faced with the prospect of an emotionally draining challenge. There was clear frustration and sadness amongst teachers as to the lack of a satisfactory way of resolving their situation.

To summarise, this process of secondary socialisation in Deaf culture emerged as a desirable but extremely emotionally challenging experience for teachers and to this end teachers identified the need for both practical and emotional support if they were to succeed in this task.

8.6. Teachers professional role: reconsidering role partners

What teachers were describing was a sense of having their professional role put into question. Without being able to achieve an insider understanding of deaf children,

teachers struggled to perceive their role comfortably. From their discussions four mechanisms or steps could be identified that helped teachers clarify their role:

1. Clarification of the Deaf community's expectations.
2. Realisation of the lack of qualities to conform to Deaf communities expectations.
3. Undermining the Deaf Community as a role partner (see Section 2.5.2)
4. Conformity to role partners that are perceived to have more power (see Section 2.5.2)

1. Clarification of the Deaf community's expectations

Teachers became increasingly clear throughout their discussions as to what the expectations of the Deaf community were - namely to become increasingly socialised in Deaf culture; to be able to connect with deaf pupils and to provide quality education by developing a Deaf/visual standpoint from which to construct/deliver education in a Deaf bilingual-bicultural school (see Section 8.5).

2. Realisation of teachers' lack of qualities to conform to the Deaf community's expectations

While teachers acknowledged the many obstacles in their way (see Section 8.5), they recognised the positive values and attitudes that they could bring which could fulfil some of the expectations attached to their role as teachers, for example using sign language and working with Deaf assistants in the classroom:

> Marta: You can pass on values in general, because you have a positive attitude and you're passing on the value for example of respect for others, and stuff like that. In a completely natural way you're conveying values.
>
> Paula: But, those values are not specific to Deaf people!
>
> Marta: No, not at all. These are general values and some of them are from the Deaf community I guess. For instance, just by working together with a Deaf person in the classroom you are passing on a value to the children. But perhaps the people ultimately responsible for passing Deaf values to deaf pupils are Deaf teachers.

3. Undermining the Deaf community as a role partner

For teachers, the Deaf community represented a 'role-partner' (see Section 2.5.2), consistent with maintaining certain personal and professional expectations about their role as teachers. In the face of a growing conviction that they could not match these expectations, teachers developed strategies to cope based on a re-evaluation of their relationship with the Deaf community. Strategies included de-valuing the Deaf

community, placing it only alongside other input needed by the child in its development, as this example illustrates:

> I agree that they have their own values, their own Deaf community but there's not only them in the world - not everything has to be reduced to that. All the time we're talking about *their* values, but there are so many more things in the world, aren't there? I think we're just limiting ourselves too much to the Deaf community and Deaf values, and there are more things in this world. ... I think that it's important for them to feel that they are not the only ones in this world.
>
> (Paula)

Teachers also described feeling somehow victimised by the often unreasonable expectations put upon them and this led to a strong sense of resentment towards the Deaf community, perceived to be abusing teachers' willingness to cooperate:

> My life is my life, and my job is my job. And that distinction is what keeps me sane. I need to keep myself mentally healthy in order to teach their pupils.
>
> (Marta)

> Enough is enough; we are not a 'Non Governmental Organisation'.
>
> (Sol)

Teachers felt that the Deaf community had no right to impose expectations upon them and in return they did not see that they had duties towards the community.

4. Conformity to a role partner, perceived to have more power

As teachers re-evaluated the Deaf community as a role partner, they looked for other 'partners' with whom to forge a more comfortable relationship, particularly with respect to expectations. Teachers found this relationship in more 'hearing-oriented' understanding of what teachers' role was – that represented their professional corpus:

> There are hearing teachers with different values and ways of facing life. It's important that they get to know those ways too, because for good or for bad we live in a diverse world. Pupils are going to go to the supermarket, to the cinema and have dinner out and they'll have to deal with hearing people. So they need to know how hearing people are too.
>
> (Paula)

In teachers' minds, their performance did not have to fulfil Deaf community's expectations for the education of deaf pupils any longer, while it was legitimised by other agencies.

8.7. The school, the Deaf community and the family

Teachers' re-evaluation of their role also impacted on their understanding of the relationship between families and the Deaf community:

> The Deaf community can be present in the lives of deaf children through organised activities: after-school clubs; talking with parents; workshops for parents where they can explain the importance for their children of

> establishing relationships with the school and out of school with other deaf children and adults. If deaf children of hearing parents have little opportunity to be in contact with Deaf culture, then they need to train those parents. And here we need to consider who is ultimately responsible for the education of these children? I think that that responsibility lies directly with parents. We are all a bit responsible but especially the parents.
>
> (Lucía)

Teachers acknowledged the need for deaf children to be in touch with deaf peers. However, they believed that this had to happen principally within the family with the school representing only a potential mediator. However some teachers saw the responsibility for this process as resting firmly with the Deaf community. As most deaf children had hearing families the role of the Deaf bilingual-bicultural school again became significant. The school's role was therefore to support this process and simultaneously promote respect for children's cultural heritage and this was understood to be a collaborative relationship between Deaf community, family and school. To achieve this, hearing teachers believed the Deaf community needed to host deaf children and their hearing families from the moment of diagnosis and this contact was understood to be fundamental to the well-being of the child:

> I still think that it's the role of the Deaf community to contact the school to get in touch with the families of deaf children. Then the school would be aware of the needs of hearing parents e.g. lack of Deaf role models, sign language, of a Deaf perspective - it would build bridges between the community and the parents. But, I stress again that it's the community that needs to reach the parents.
>
> (Marta)

To summarise, in order to cope with acknowledging they were not always able to meet the deaf child's needs, teachers both re-evaluated and distanced themselves from their partnerships with the Deaf community. While Deaf culture was seen as valuable in understanding pupils and improving teachers' performance and Deaf professionals were welcome into the school, teachers believed the Deaf community needed to provide opportunities to offer this support, (rather than teachers seeking out this experience) and this should happen on terms established to meet the needs of both parties.

8.8. Conclusion

In conclusion, becoming better teachers of the deaf within a bilingual-bicultural approach called for a social and emotional process that impacted on teachers' identities as hearing people. While the prospect of improving professionally was a strong motivation for teachers, they understood personal engagement with the Deaf community to lie outside their responsibilities as teachers.

Realisation of the benefits that engagement with Deaf culture could bring to their practice, led teachers to search for ways of engaging with the community. However, through their exploration teachers realised they needed significant support, and some believed they needed to be encouraged by education 'law' to socialise in Deaf environments.

Teachers realisation of their need to achieve a Deaf/visual perspective and of the lack of support to do so, created a threat to their understanding of their role as teachers - that is, they became increasingly aware of gaps in the skills they had to offer children but no realistic means to fill these gaps were available to them. With this in mind, teachers sought an understanding of their role that was realistic for them. To this end, the Deaf community was best understood as something detached from them on a personal level and while valuable to Deaf children's education, something which Deaf people had a responsibility to integrate into school.

In the context of this study, the contributions of the Deaf community's knowledge and cultural values brought by Deaf assistants, attempted to bring hearing professionals closer to the deaf child's perspective and interpretations of issues that take place in the classroom, and not to establish the ultimate truth about Deaf education and teachers' practice. A slightly essentialist standpoint against which to contrast teachers' interpretations was found to be at times detrimental turning teachers' against the Deaf assistants' perspective (e.g. when talking about personal engagement in the Deaf community), however it was also beneficial to create thought provoking discussions that encouraged teachers to look beyond their own frameworks of understanding, taking a different standpoint from their own (e.g. sign language and contact with deaf people). Deaf community's input to Deaf education needs to be researched in depth to avoid the risks of presenting the Deaf community as an unchallenged panacea.

Chapter 9

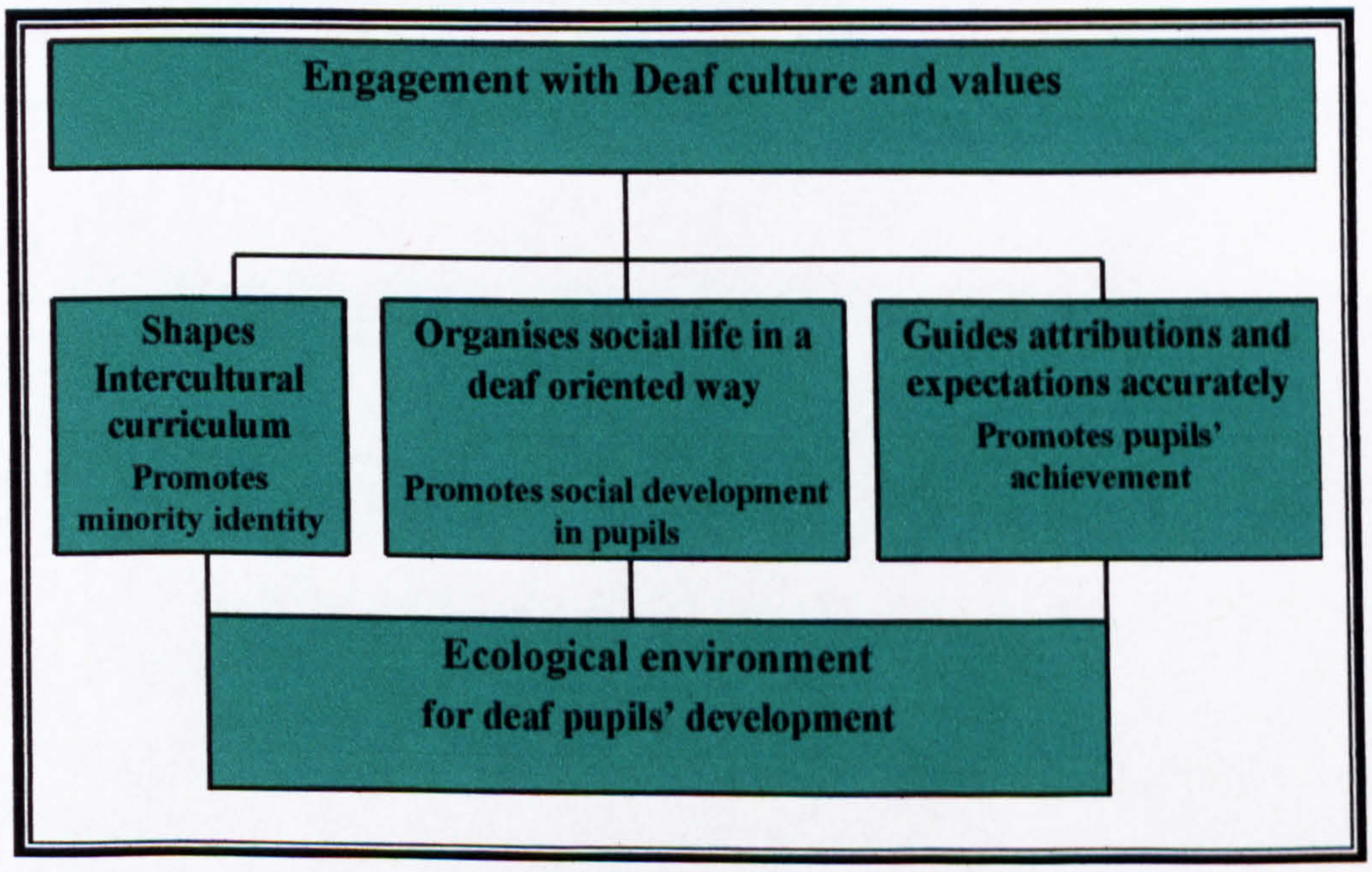
Discussion, Conclusions and Implications

9.1. Discussion of results

There is evidence of deaf pupils' potential but conditions within family, school and community do not always offer optimal developmental opportunities and so often the opportunity to promote well-being is limited. While there was extensive evidence of the essential role that hearing values played in constructing home ecologies (see Chapter 1), little was known about the significance for Deaf school ecologies of teachers' values and beliefs.

Bilingual-bicultural schools were set up to promote values and beliefs about deaf children that are informed by Deaf culture i.e. by shaping the curriculum, organising life in a Deaf-oriented way and by guiding teachers' attributions and expectations accurately (see Figure 9.1). These schools' ecologies theoretically offered an opportunity for deaf pupils to achieve academically and to form strong Deaf identities.

Figure 9. 1: Implications of engaging with Deaf culture and values



However, the results of the research showed that practice in bilingual-bicultural schools departed considerably from this expectation.

Within the Deaf bilingual-bicultural school, a diversity of social representations were used by teachers to interpret deaf pupils.

In Chapter 5, it was found that teachers' beliefs resonated with an educational framework of understanding in which 'deaf pupils' were understood as being like 'any other pupil' with educational needs that teachers needed to meet. Teachers contemplated the deaf child as an individual and acknowledged pupils' Deaf cultural background. While this was the main construct, teachers also considered that deaf pupils' difficulties in developing speech were a limitation on the child's opportunities.

Representing the child as an individual like any other, triggered in hearing teachers ecological dissonance that affected their understanding of the deaf pupil. The image of normality that emerged from this representation was incongruent with teachers' expectations/attributions of how 'any other child' would behave. This situation forced teachers to reconstruct the deaf pupil as deviant/deficient from their hearing standard of what was a child - so deaf pupils became 'normal pupils with a hearing impairment' or 'normal pupils with a language disorder' (see Chapter 7 for more detail). As a result of these constructions, teachers had moved from an educational framework to a speech-centred one.

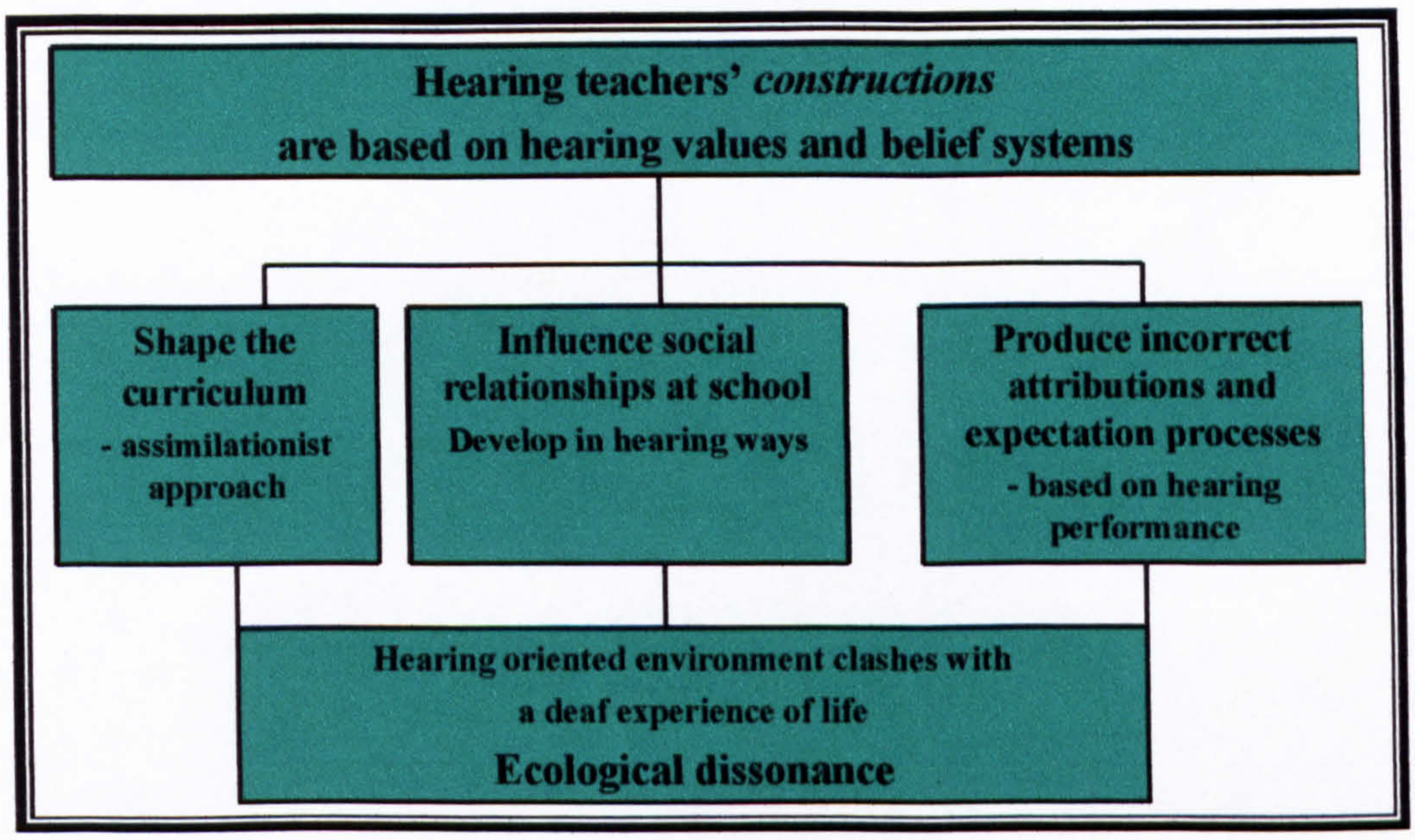
The image of a child with individual educational needs i.e. according to the Spanish constructivist model, is therefore misinterpreted. Teachers' educational discourse fails to respect the child's individual needs and characteristics. 'Educational needs' of deaf pupils are believed to result from deficiency and not from a representation of an alternative life experience and culture i.e. education is constructed as a remedial intervention with the child.

Teachers' beliefs and values created an atmosphere of 'normality' when talking about the deaf child, grounded in their *hearing* experience, beliefs and values. Although teachers were acquainted with alternative interpretations of life (Deaf life), they had not incorporated these in a way that allowed them to transform their way of constructing the child and thinking about his/her education (see Chapter 5 and Chapter 7).

Hearing teachers did however apply this framework in understanding some areas of Deaf education, for example in advocating bilingual-bicultural approaches and the use of sign language (see Chapter 5). However, when constructing the child from Deaf frameworks teachers reduced the child to communication needs (see Chapter 7). This demonstrated that teachers were able to relate to the Deaf minority community framework but not able to interpret all dimensions of deaf pupils' experience.

Teachers' beliefs, values and behaviour rooted in their ability to hear, seem to accumulate throughout their life and significantly impact on their approach to Deaf education. Clearly applying hearing frameworks of understanding to explain/interpret deaf pupils meant that teachers' internal models of understanding were based on hearing pupils' nature and performance. When deaf pupils behaviour did not meet hearing teachers' 'unrealistic' expectations teachers resolved the tension created by this 'ecological dissonance' by reconstructing the child as deficient (Chapter 7). As a result, deaf pupils are put in a vulnerable position - one in which they can neither meet teachers' expectations nor develop as confident Deaf individuals.

Figure 9. 2 Implications of teachers' hearing values and beliefs



Working in a bilingual-bicultural school introduced teachers to new representations of deaf pupils and alternative frameworks of understanding (i.e. Deaf/ minority community framework). However, as this research has shown, this does not necessarily significantly alter the way hearing teachers think or, in other words does not significantly reduce the risk of ecological dissonance. Instead, what has been observed is that teachers present a constant tension between their natural hearing framework and a tentative understanding of an alternative Deaf framework.

In trying to understand the deaf pupil, teachers' reflections were observed at several different levels and in different contexts, for example society, family and school. In doing so, teachers revealed an analysis of pupils' life that paralleled the 'theory of systems' outlined by Bronfenbrenner (1979).

Teachers' understanding of the deaf child was in the context of the systems in which the child was *directly* immersed i.e. school and the family (i.e. microsystems). As teachers discussed these themes they also reflected on the *relationship* between school and family (i.e. mesosystem). In exploring teachers' relationship with parents, obstacles were identified that had roots in systems *outside* the family or the school - for example, inappropriate policy making (i.e. exosystem). Understanding deaf pupils meant also considering society's expectations for deaf pupils and in doing so, the *values* that guided hearing society (i.e. macrosystem). Finally, the *period in time* in which deaf pupils had to live their lives was also considered in teachers' explanations of deaf pupils and their education (i.e. chronosystem). In understanding deaf pupils, teachers needed to consider all the various systems that affected deaf pupils (see Chapter 1).

A tension was evident between the two fundamental interpretations of deaf children that is, that deaf pupils should be encouraged to be themselves and the belief that deaf children needed to be assimilated into hearing culture. This tension, essentially between Deaf and hearing interpretations, could be seen to penetrate each system (see Table 9.1).

Table 9. 1: Tensions within different systems

System (Fig. 9.3)	Theme	Hearing led interpretation	Deaf led interpretation	Tension
Chronosystem (E)	Technology	Technology development (e.g. email, sms and alternative ways of communication) offers new barriers for deaf people in society.	Technology development (e.g. email, sms and alternative ways of communication) offers new opportunities for deaf people to use their own means of communication	Protecting deaf people vs. promoting deaf people's independence.
Macrosystem (D)	Society	Being in society calls for the development of speech and abiding to hearing rules of life.	Being in society calls for developing personal independence, confidence, multilingualism, …	Society is hearing vs. society is comprised of independent and skilled individuals.
Exosystem (C)	Policy making			No tension observed
Mesosystem (B)	School-parents relationship			No tension observed
Microsystem (A2)	Education	Providing information using sign language and developing literacy skills is the way forward in education.	Empowering deaf pupils' Deaf identity is the way forward in education.	Assimilation vs. empowerment.
Microsystem (A1)	Family	Families (hearing) do not see the need to introduce changes in the family to accommodate the deaf child.	Families (hearing) use visual strategies to enable communication.	Impose a hearing standard vs. accepting difference.
Individual	Deaf pupils	Deaf pupils are like any other children. Deaf pupils are children that can't hear. Deaf pupils are children with a language disorder.	Deaf pupils are individuals with a visual experience of life. Deaf children are members of a Deaf social and cultural group.	Being an incomplete hearing person vs. being a culturally different Deaf person .

Tensions became progressively more apparent as teachers' reflections moved from more 'macro' to more 'micro' systems. For instance, while within a chronosystem we can locate subtle tensions between the potential barriers/alternatives to communication imposed by new technological development, as teachers' reflections moved closer to systems which more directly affected the child, then teachers' beliefs became more explicit. For example, the goal of education for teachers (i.e. social integration) was discussed in terms of two very different approaches - allowing deaf pupils to develop as Deaf individuals but also facilitating integration through the development of literacy and information.

Teachers dwelled on a constant tension between interpretations from hearing and Deaf perspectives. It became clear that a *tentative* understanding of a Deaf framework did not provide optimal conditions to construct effective ecologies for deaf children. Teachers' struggles to combine two very different frameworks within which to understand life, uncovered a significant aspect of deaf children's developmental ecology: communication and identification processes with the child are limited due to a lack of common life experience with the deaf child. Therefore, deaf children's ecologies of development should be represented by taking into account those limitations. In other words, Bronfenbrenner's illustration of the ecology of system needs to acknowledge in the case of deaf children, that hearing led systems do not respond with complete efficacy to the deaf child in a natural way (see Section 9.2).

As a result of our understanding of deaf pupils' ecologies, developing further Deaf awareness in hearing teachers became the target of the subsequent study (see Chapter 8). In an attempt to alter significantly the ways in which teachers were thinking, Deaf assistants' perspective on issues related to deaf pupils' education and behaviour was provided to them.

Results showed that developing a Deaf perspective necessitated some socialising within the Deaf community. However, in order to see things within a Deaf framework a significant emotional experience that triggered reflections about teachers' personal and professional identities was also necessary (see Chapter 8). While hearing teachers were motivated to see things within a framework other than their own, their identity as hearing individuals emerged recurrently as an obstacle. Teachers constructed life from their hearing identities and while different interpretations could be accumulated, what becomes progressively clear is the impossibility for hearing teachers to develop a Deaf identity. As a result, teachers could learn how Deaf people constructed their life and share/experience

life within a Deaf context, as a cultural experience, but it would be virtually impossible for teachers to construct life successfully in visual/Deaf terms, as this would involve constructing a new identity that did not refer to the way hearing people experience life.

Resistance was often triggered in teachers when social experiences in the Deaf community were suggested. Teachers' opposition can be interpreted as a consequence of a twofold situation: on the one hand teachers experienced trepidation when trying to shift from their hearing view of life to a Deaf framework of understanding. On the other hand, the realisation of their need for a significant social experience in Deaf culture produced an emotional impact on teachers.

Teachers realised their hearing-based perception (i.e. construct system) was not valid to operate within a Deaf perspective. Research showed that if asked to construct life within a framework that is not natural to them - that is, a Deaf framework- teachers need an alternative solid framework to rely upon. Teachers' Deaf awareness, though insightful, was not mature enough to develop a Deaf perspective through which to see/interpret deaf pupils and life at school. In turn, teachers felt threatened when their way of seeing life was not seen as valid, but no alternative was available to them. The lack of confident Deaf input made teachers contemplate with caution a Deaf framework as an alternative.

Emotions played a significant role in teachers' pattern of resistance. As mentioned, teachers experienced a threat when their way of looking at things was invalidated and still no alternative was presented.

Developing an alternative perspective involves, as this research has shown, many risks for teachers. A fear of feeling isolated as members of a hearing minority within the Deaf community, was uncovered. The isolation of being in a community that is not their own, in which they feel as strangers among others with little in common with those that surrounded them, made teachers feel uncomfortable. Teachers had a perfect role model of isolation in deaf people/pupils and were reluctant to seek a similar experience of alienation. A good example of this was in the course of Study 4, when one teacher expressed her will to go to the Deaf club but lack of determination to do so; another immediately offered her support and suggested going together to the Deaf association. Breaking the isolation of being in the Deaf association by going along with another hearing person seems to reassure teachers that the experience of isolation will be minimised.

Within this pattern, one might also suggest that teachers' fears of isolation within the community were projecting teachers' ethnocentrism –fear of others and their values/language - when approaching the community. Teachers felt threatened by Deaf people and their values, as they had fewer abilities to cope in a Deaf led environment and teachers' control/power was diminished.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, a feeling of loss was connected with a secondary socialisation in the Deaf community. Teachers feared that engaging with the community meant losing parts of their hearing lives and personal identities as hearing individuals. In teachers' minds a secondary socialisation embodies significant personal risks.

Teachers found ways to cope with their emotions. Teachers recognised that coping would have a personal effect that triggered the fears and risks just described. Deaf professionals wanted a personal involvement - to discover the community as individuals (i.e. not teachers) and undergo a cultural experience, which may ultimately influence the way they saw life, deaf people and their relationships. However, teachers within their solid hearing identities enter the community from their professional identities/role (e.g. learning sign language was useful for teaching deaf pupils) behind which they shield themselves from isolation and personal loss.

What has become progressively clear in this research is that understanding deaf pupils, within Deaf frameworks, is as much an emotional as a social and intellectual experience in the culture and community of Deaf people. Understanding deaf pupils within Deaf frameworks transforms the way we conceptualise theories of ecological systems as well as other understandings of the deaf child.

9.2. Theoretical Contribution

Bronfenbrenner offers a model known as the Theory of Ecological Systems to explain the children's socialisation process. The notion of ecology provides a helpful means of conceptualising the dynamic established between the adults and the child within the different social systems (see Chapter 1). As it was presented in Chapter 1, an ecology of human development is defined by Bronfenbrenner as:

> ... the progressive mutual accommodation between an active, growing human being and the changing properties of the immediate settings in which the developing person lives, as this process is affected by relation between these settings, and by the larger contexts in which the settings are embedded, *over time*[1]. (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p.21)

[1] Italics are mine. Bronfenbrenner (1996b) included time as part of children's ecology of systems.

The notion of ecology is based on the mutual adaptation between adults and children by which the socialisation of the child takes place (mutuality model). From this model of mutuality the prediction is that children's engagement with their social environment and adults' responsiveness and sensitivity to the child allow relationships between children and adults to emerge. This pattern of reciprocity between adults and children generates mutual adaptation.

If we apply this model to the education of deaf children within the interactions between hearing teachers and deaf children there is an assumption that an adequate ecology for deaf pupils' development is created- that is, one in which adaptation between the deaf child and the hearing adult naturally occurs.

From the research what was found however was that adaptation between teachers and pupils relies not only on teachers' and pupils' *mutual* will to communicate, but also on a *mutual* shared experience between the adult and the child that facilitates the process. Therefore an important assumption within the mutuality model underlying the notion of ecology needs to be acknowledged– that is, that adaptation between adult and child (i.e. teachers and pupils) is influenced by an expected commonness between the carer's nature and the one of the child, fundamental to reciprocal social interaction. Hearing teachers eloquently illustrated this in Chapter 6:

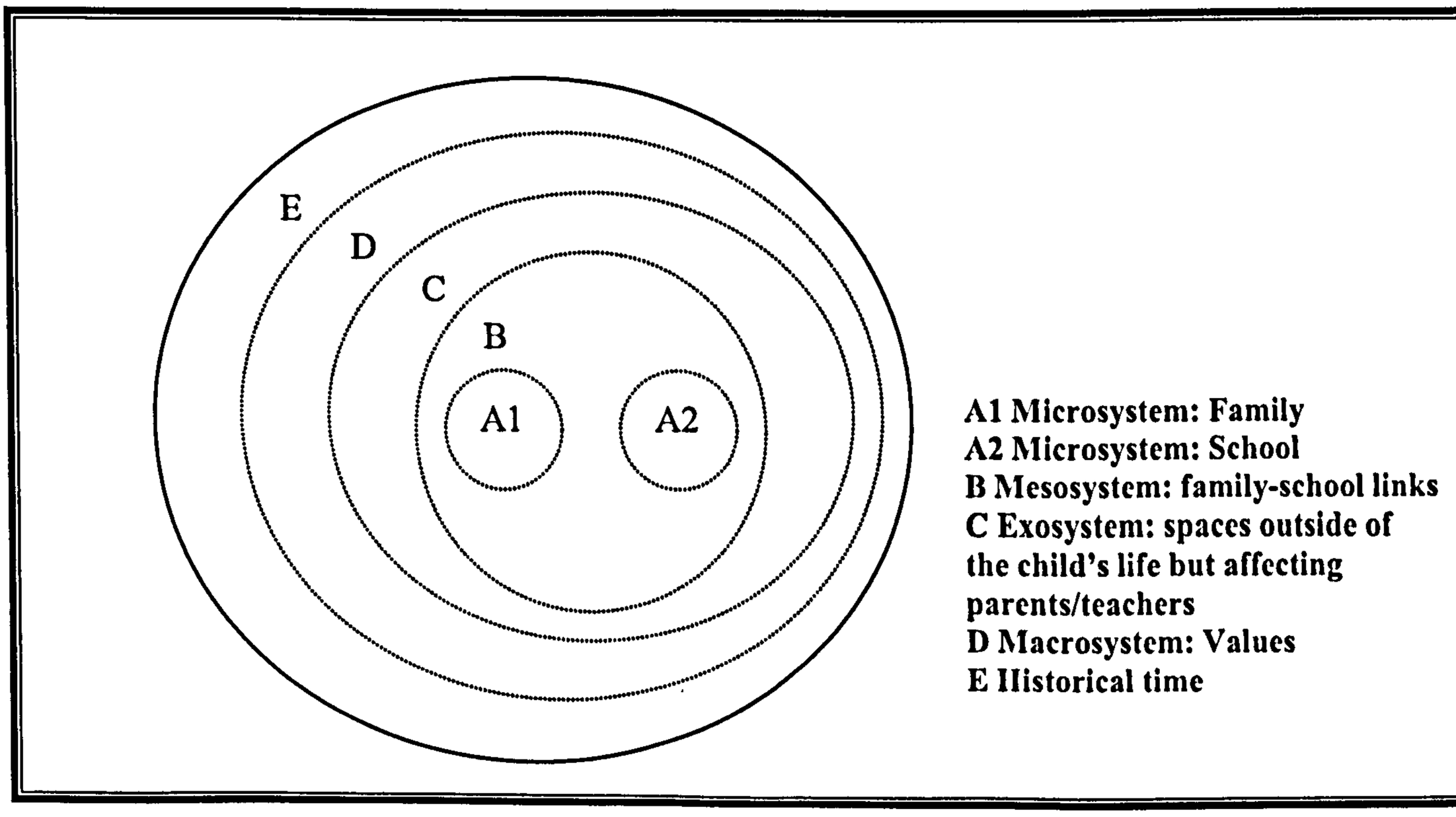
> And the feeling... of... let's see if I make myself clear...of mutual unawareness. With a hearing child you have automatically clues of what he can be thinking... how to speak to him, how to joke with him, you have clues to interpret all his facial signs, all his... everything... you are with someone that you recognise. [...] While with deaf children that does not happen. At least it does not happen for me as hearing person. I do not have all the clues. I do not feel equally, that does not mean that with a hearing child I will understand him. Lots of times what they say is incoherent, they say things that don't make sense, but it is the same, it does not make me think, 'I do not understand him', it doesn't! I take it for granted that what he is saying has a meaning for him, he is telling me something that he has lived, and although I do not understand I follow him and we are able to establish... because there is something. While with a deaf student there is difficulty in recognising the other, there is a sense of 'what is he saying to me'? It is the same in sign language, in speech...
>
> (Lola)

As teachers highlighted, relationships between deaf pupils and themselves as hearing individuals were obstructed by a lack of common identity with the child. Relating to deaf pupils was like adapting to a stranger, to someone who represented something different from teachers' self and their life experiences.

The motivation for teacher and pupil to communicate is essential in building a relationship in which adaptation to one another can occur. Anticipation and understanding as to how the other is experiencing life is a crucial element in this process of adaptation. The role that shared life experience plays between adult and child is a crucial aspect of the mutuality model traditionally overlooked. Theories about development and about the ecology of systems, built upon ideas of mutuality and adaptation have not considered the possibility of adult and child having significantly different experiences of life. While the significance of a shared experience between carer and child might not have stood out in the study of hearing children's development, it is clearly a key element in understanding deaf children's development within hearing-led family and school ecologies. Potential obstacles in communication within school and home ecologies, resulting from parents/teachers and children/pupils significant differences in perceiving life are not acknowledged.

Bronfenbrenner's Theory of systems fails too to consider the importance of a common experience between carer and child and therefore his illustration of the ecology of systems should be modified when representing deaf children's ecologies. Systems are only meeting at certain times deaf children's needs and therefore, gaps in the systems occur. This misfit is represented by dotted lines (see Figure 9.3).

Figure 9. 3: Illustration of deaf pupils' ecology of systems.



In this study teachers' lack of awareness of their deaf pupils' life experience limited communication and understanding of the child. Hearing teachers instinctively set up strategies that enabled them to get closer to deaf children's understanding. One example of these strategies is in the collaborations that hearing teachers established with their Deaf colleagues. Deaf colleagues often bridged the gap between teachers and pupils in the classroom, enabling empathy and rapport to emerge between hearing teachers and their deaf pupils (see Chapter 8):

> Lucía: What Sandra gives me is the inner reference in the mind of the deaf child, something that's not very clear to me.
>
> Marta: Yes, that's right, the way in which the deaf child perceives the things that we are teaching…
>
> Lucía: …the inner reference for the deaf child, how they perceive things, because I'm sure it's different. She gives me that.

This had clear implications for the school ecology. The ecology set up in school was not a 'safe nest' within which the child was understood and responded to. Instead, what was described was a hearing-led system in which teachers connected only with certain areas of deaf pupils' lives. In effect, the school provided an ecology that responded partially to deaf pupils' developmental needs.

In the study of deaf children's school ecologies, a different picture of how to conceptualise deaf pupils' ecological system emerges (see Figure 9.4). The system into which most deaf children are born is directed by hearing adults (e.g. parents, teachers, policy makers and society), who through their experience understand the needs of developing individuals in their own hearing terms. The systems are therefore hearing led systems. Within this system it is assumed children share a common experience with their carers and therefore are expected to guide their life auditorily/orally, in other words, systems in which the condition of mutuality is satisfied. Within this hearing-led system the developmental ecology of the deaf child is weakened.

Figure 9.4 represents an adapted form of Bronfenbrenner's model. The incomplete circle (macrosystem-D) represents that the values that guide our society do not consider a Deaf way of life (beliefs, values and identity) that understands how the deaf child is experiencing life. Therefore, Deaf values are not present in social spaces (community, workplace, university) in which parents and teachers usually live. As a result, hearing people's (e.g. parents and teachers) awareness/understanding about Deaf life (exosystem-C) is limited. This can be seen as a result of reduced contact with D/deaf people from

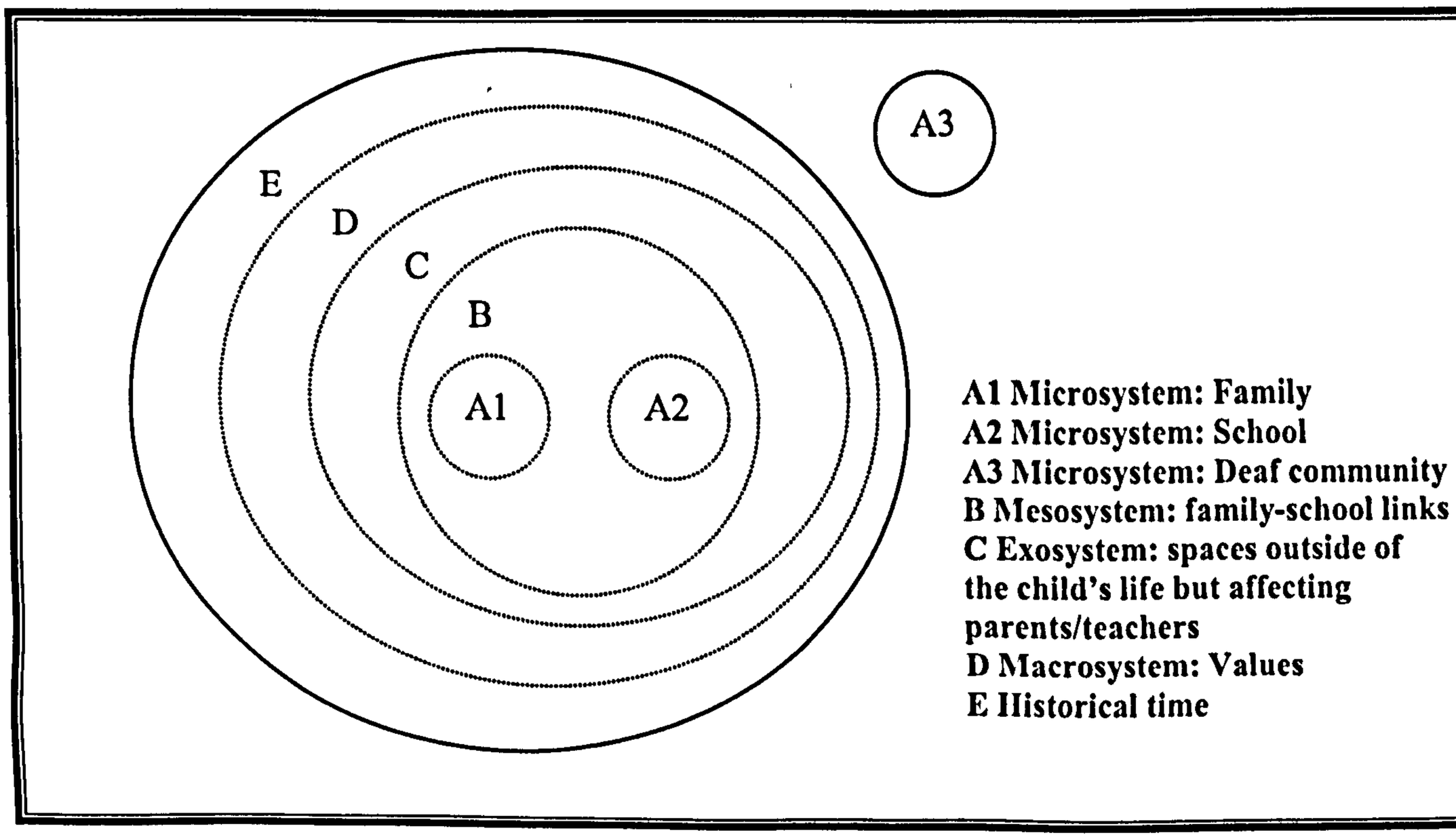
whom to learn what it means to be deaf and few Deaf people working and participating in society alongside hearing people.

The relationship between the school and the family serves mutually to reinforce each other's perceptions i.e. treating the child at home and in school as a *hearing* person (mesosystem-B). Furthermore, within this model the child is understood to be a hearing individual who does not adapt to adults' worldview due to his/her abnormal nature (microsystem-A1/A2).

Hearing-led ecologies can only understand/represent the child in a partial way primarily because parents and teachers cannot relate naturally or intuitively to the child in the context of a deaf life. In an attempt to illustrate this misfit circles that represent the systems have been left incomplete. While at certain points parents and teachers are able to understand and guide the needs of the deaf child e.g. understanding the role of sign language (lined sections of circle/systems see Figure 9.4), they frequently report misunderstanding what it means to be deaf and not fully grasping the implications of a visual life experience (gaps in circle/systems see Figure 9.4).

However, while this is the situation in the ecological system in which the child is immersed i.e. group of permanence (see Section 1.5.3.) an alternative system can be seen to exist external to the child's life (A3). This system comprises a Deaf-led organisation in which the child can communicate and identify (see Figure 9.4).

Figure 9. 4: Model of deaf pupils from hearing families social systems.

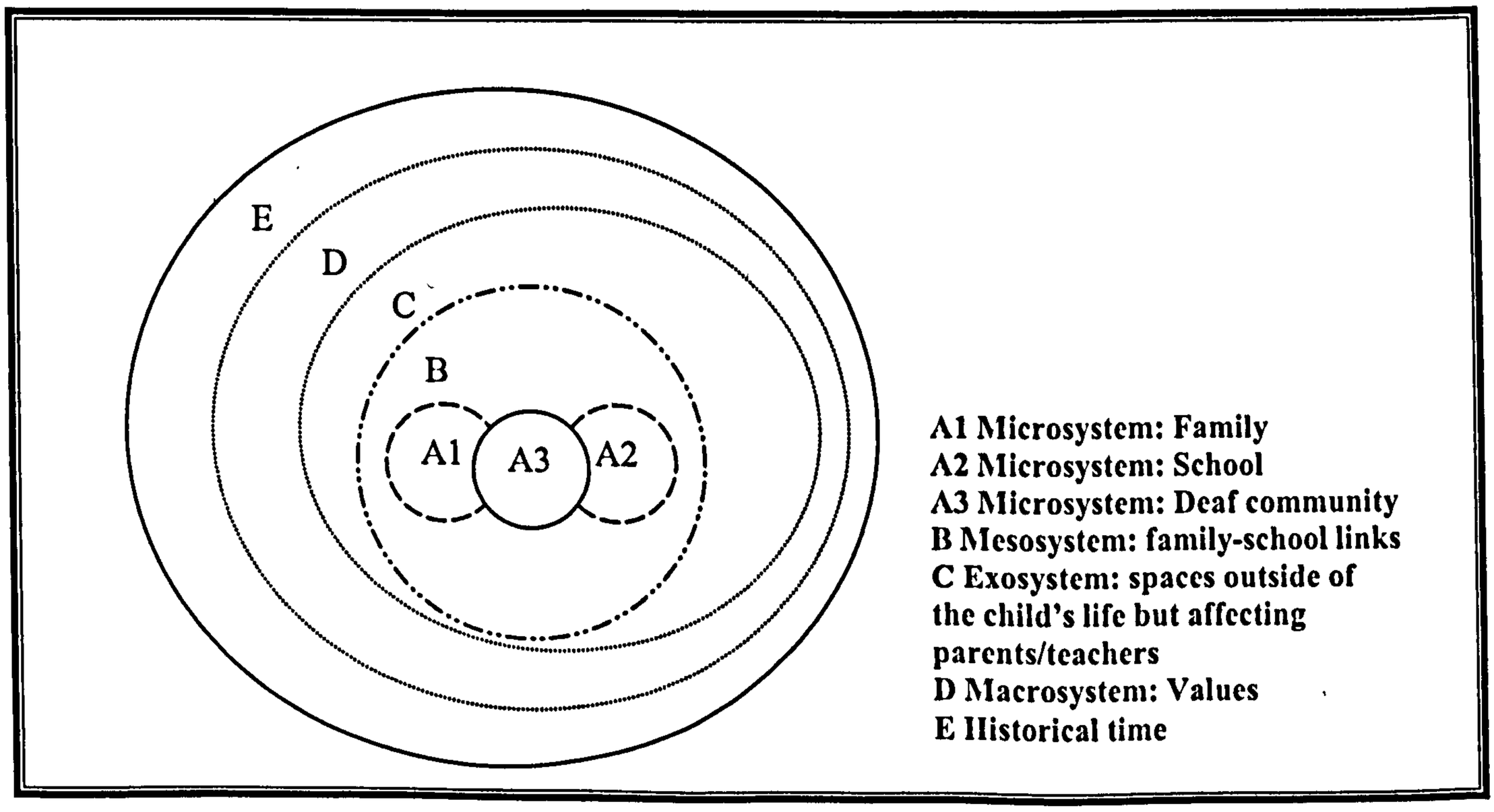


A third microsystem can be identified representing the Deaf community or the group of reference for deaf children. This microsystem lies outside the school and the family, that is the environment in which parents and teachers usually operate and also the ethnocentric values that underlie our societies. This third system is the only one that can foster deaf pupils' development and socialisation effectively (complete lined circle/system (A3) illustrates a system in which Deaf adults and children share a similar experience of life- that is a deaf experience). This system represents Bronfenbrenner's conceptualisation of healthy developmental environment. However, the deaf child that is born in a hearing family with no connexions to the Deaf community is totally isolated from this ecology of development.

Within the system described (see Figure 9.4 A1, A2, B, C and D), deaf children cannot be understood. The historical time in which the deaf child is immersed is the only functional ecology - the deaf child exists in a space and time.

From this study it is possible to conceptualise alternative models to illustrate a functional ecology of systems for deaf children- that is, changes that can make the whole system (from macrosystem –society- to microsystem –family and school-) a more ecological environment for the deaf child. Limitation of the model presented has provided an impetus to develop more effective ecologies for the deaf child. Specifically a new ecology comes from removing obstacles within a weak system and creating opportunities to establish new relationships between deaf children and the adults who care for them (see Figure 9.5). Clearly, the Deaf community in understanding and effectively guiding deaf children's development occupies a central place in the new system.

Figure 9. 5: Introducing the Deaf community in deaf children ecology of systems



This alternative structure, however, only provides limited improvements to deaf children's ecology. The Deaf community, offering beliefs and values with which to support a Deaf-led life, not only provides a nurturing ecology for the child but also influences parents and teachers. In working together the family, the school and the Deaf community, parents and teachers learn new perspectives on life (as illustrated in Fig. 9.5 by a less broken line). It is possible to see how this alternative theoretical construction is embedded in participants' experience. The following examples drawn from the data illustrate the relationship between these systems, namely the family (A1), the school (A2) and the Deaf community (A3).

Firstly, evidence of the relationship between A2 and A3, namely the school and the Deaf community has emerged in this study. To illustrate this, teachers suggested that working collaboratively with Deaf assistants in school had helped them understand deaf children's experience:

> Paula: What I know about Deaf culture and deaf children I have discovered when working at the school...For instance the struggle to get them into line after break time. At the beginning it was an obsession and then one day I said to myself, 'but don't you realise they can't see the child behind them so they can't sign to each other,... hearing children can speak to each other on their way into the classroom but these children need to turn themselves around in order to sign to each other. They need to share what is going on in their lives, what they are thinking about and so on' ... and I said to myself: 'I'll leave them alone! Let them walk to class without keeping lines'.
>
> Researcher: Did working with a Deaf assistant help you in any way?
>
> Paula: Yes, of course. This example, it was actually Teresa {Deaf assistant} that opened my eyes. One day she said to the children: 'Get into line because if not she gets upset' and I then asked myself, wait a minute... do they have to be in a line because I get upset or because they need to learn to walk in order in a line? [laughing]... talking about this with her I realised, I said she's absolutely right, I'd never thought about it in that way...things that she says or her facial expressions - I realise when I am making those sorts of mistakes. She is really helpful for me.

Similarly, the relationship between A1 and A3, namely the family and the Deaf community can be illustrated in the following example from the data. Teachers suggested that the Deaf community should share their knowledge and experience with hearing parents in order to encourage appropriate parenting skills and work collaboratively with families:

> The Deaf community can be present in the lives of deaf children through organised activities: after-school clubs; talking with parents; workshops for parents where they can explain the importance for their children of establishing relationships, with the school and out of school, with other deaf children and adults. If deaf children of hearing parents have little opportunity to be in contact with Deaf culture, then they need to train those parents. We need to consider who is ultimately responsible for the

> education of these children? I think that that responsibility lies directly with parents. We are all a bit responsible but especially the parents.
>
> (Lucía)

Finally in reflecting about the dynamic between A1, A2 and A3, that is the family, the school and the Deaf community, it was significant that teachers' belief was that the Deaf community should be proactive in setting up strategies to get families and schools involved in collaborative work with the community, as Fig. 9.5 illustrates:

> I still think that it's the role of the Deaf community to contact the school to get in touch with the families of deaf children. The school would then be aware of the needs of hearing parents e.g. lack of Deaf role models, sign language, of a Deaf perspective and it would build bridges between the community and the parents. But, I stress again that it's the community that needs to reach the parents.
>
> (Marta)

While Figure 9.5 offers a different and healthier construction of the relationships between key facts in the immediate developmental environment, beyond the microsystems –the family (A1), the school (A2) and the Deaf community (A3)- there is still a lack of awareness of deaf children's needs. Representations of deaf children as 'limited' and 'deficient' hearing individuals are deeply rooted in society. Lack of awareness of a Deaf-led life experience limits deaf children's opportunities for full participation.

While the Deaf community can be seen to impact on deaf children and their home/school ecologies, its effects on the values that guide society are limited. If the implications of the model are explored two key limitations emerge. The first limitation is that locating the Deaf community in the core of the deaf child's life, limits the opportunity for society's wider values towards deafness to be challenged. The second limitation of the model is that it is functional while the deaf child is at school and relatively protected by home, school and the Deaf community. However, it can be speculated that in leaving this relatively secure system, the child will confront other less nurturing influences. The following quotation illustrates this second limitation:

> Researcher: What are the obstacles in deaf pupils' education?
> Olga: The obstacles are in those that are not deaf! In my view hearing people (including myself) are very complicated. There is a lot of work to be done in this field- the education of deaf pupils-, and there are also lots of prejudices and barriers that need to be brought down by hearing people.
>
> (Olga)

Participants described the need for more radical changes to take place before deaf children are given equal opportunities to develop and enjoy life fully in society. Returning to Bronfenbrenner's theory (1979; 1996) while the possibility of ecological

dissonance was never contemplated, the possibility of transforming ecological systems, thus altering the values and beliefs that underlie in systems was considered:

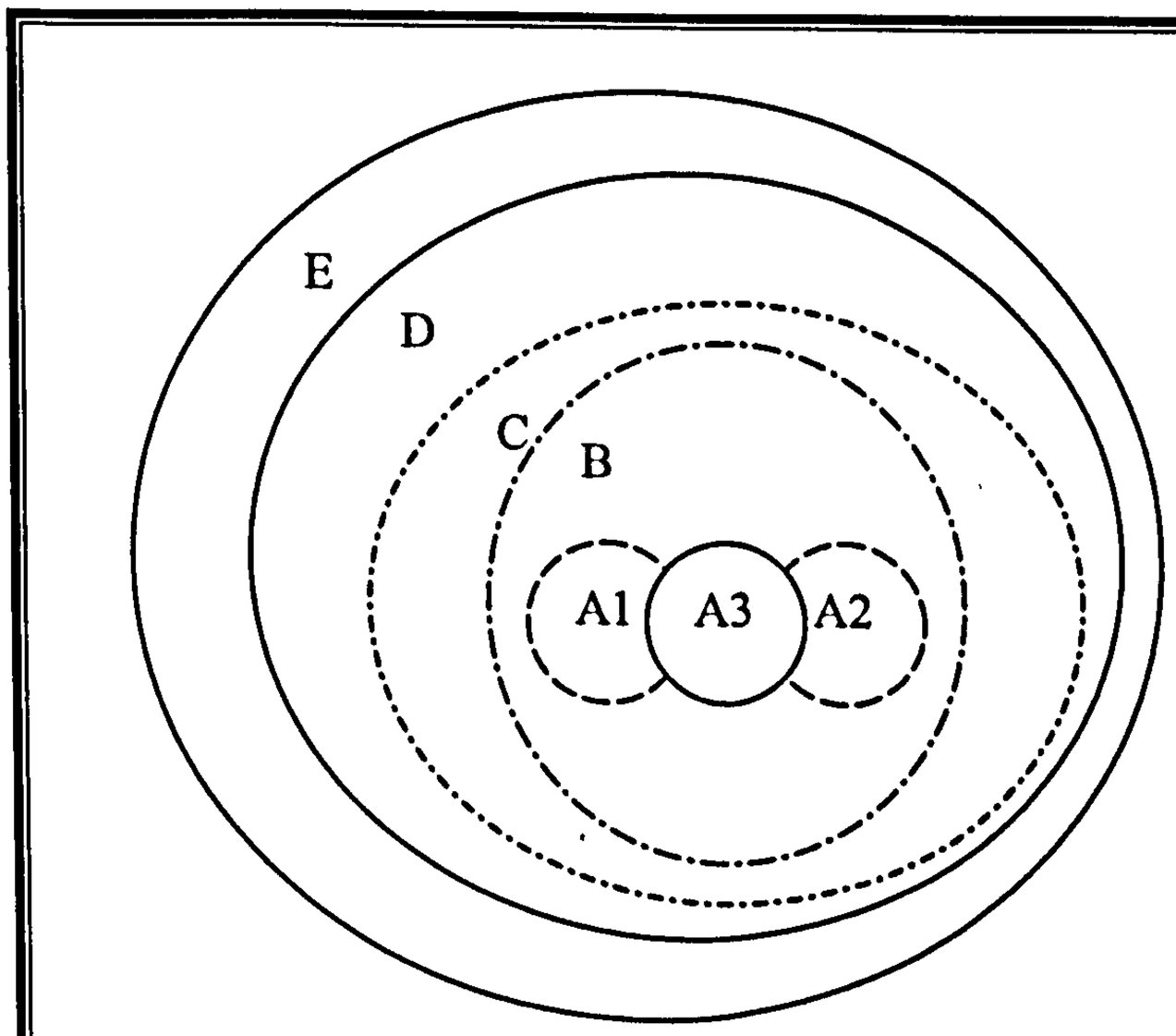
> A transforming experiment involves the systematic alteration and restructuring of existing ecological systems in ways that challenge the form of social organization, belief systems, and lifestyles prevailing in a particular culture or subculture.
> (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p.41)

A 'transforming experiment' that would provide an environment that takes into account Deaf and hearing oriented life, could be considered if the agenda of the Deaf community were understood and integrated alongside mainstream values and beliefs This alternative model is illustrated in Figure 9.6 with unbroken line around macrosystem-D. Deaf communities' values would impact and enrich other systems of society. Hearing people would be given the opportunity to understand deaf life from a Deaf perspective. Returning to the data, in support of this adaptation to the model, teachers explored the need for changes in wider society to reinforce their collaborative work with schools and families:

> If more work was being done with the family, if deafness was detected earlier in the child's life, and if [having a deaf child] on a social level was thought of differently, then there would be early intervention teams, psychologists to give guidance to families, and children would not have so many behavioural problems that overwhelm all of us.
>
> (Sandra)

The ultimate outcome of this 'transforming experiment' would be a collaborative relationship between the Deaf community, the family and the school and an improved awareness and healthier understanding of deaf life among hearing society at large. These transformations would impact immediately and directly on the deaf child's developmental ecology (as illustrated by a progressively less broken line delineating the systems, namely A1, A2, B and C) and ensuring continuity between childhood and adult life.

Figure 9. 6: Transforming experiment



Having established the potential for change in attitudes and beliefs in hearing people, it is necessary to consider now the mechanism of this change. Kelly's model provides a framework with which to understand how a change in perspective can take place.

In Kelly's Theory of Personal Constructs (1955; 1991 see Chapter 2), communication is understood as a process by which individuals can reproduce the others' construct systems - that is, can understand his/her framework of beliefs, values and experiences.

For Kelly, emotion plays a fundamental role in the way individuals construct life. In turn, the lens through which we understand life emerges from an individual's personal identity. Constructing life in different terms (e.g. visual/Deaf) can be understood as the result of a significant difference in identity.

By exploring teachers' attempts to develop an understanding of deaf pupils within Deaf frameworks, it becomes clear that the beliefs, experiences and values incorporated in their identity as hearing individuals come into tension/conflict with Deaf frameworks of understanding. Hearing teachers' identity does not allow for a simultaneous Deaf construct system. As hearing teachers cannot live a Deaf life, it is unlikely that they can potentially develop a construct system that incorporates a Deaf identity.

The crucial value of Kelly's theory is that it is not necessary to have lived a deaf life to understand deaf children. What is essential is to have a similar and compatible interpretative system. This can allow a similar understanding of life (known as 'experience corollary' see Chapter 2). While hearing teachers' construct systems are based on their own hearing identities, there is potential for developing interpretative systems similar to those used by Deaf people to understand life in a similar way to the deaf pupil (i.e. Deaf frameworks of understanding). Deaf frameworks of understanding can be developed by having significant social experience in the Deaf community taking teachers closer to Deaf peoples' beliefs and values and effectively developing similar interpretations of deaf people's experiences.

To develop similar interpretative systems a Deaf construct system has to be accessible/available to hearing people. When teachers were provided with alternative ways of thinking about their relationship with deaf pupils and the Deaf community, a recurrent pattern of resistance emerged in the this study. Within Kelly's theory, individuals feel threatened when their construct system is invalidated but adequate alternatives are not available (Kelly, 1955; 1991). The invalidation of hearing construct

systems in understanding deaf children has the potential to create a threatening situation for those hearing adults responsible for deaf children. Kelly is explicit as to the difficulties in assimilating different interpretative systems, and indeed acknowledges the emotional impact of this process on individuals. With this in mind, hearing individuals expressed difficulties in developing Deaf construct systems naturally because of their hearing experience/identity. Development of alternative frameworks is facilitated by robust and explicit Deaf perspectives. This input reduces any threat by allowing the individual to see, through a different lens (Deaf framework). In the study, the absence of an alternative lens through which to interpret the deaf child, forced hearing teachers to return to their natural hearing construct systems and disregard other alternative frameworks. This emerged as a way of reducing threat and simply coping within home and school ecologies.

In summary, deaf children's developmental ecologies force us to consider the ethnocentricity in which theories of development explain children's experiences. In the case of deaf children, Deaf beliefs, values and identities should play a fundamental role in nurturing the child. Lack of Deaf awareness in society negatively affects parents and teachers as well as other social institutions that need to respond to deaf children's needs. The development of Deaf frameworks of understanding in hearing-led ecologies necessitates participation in Deaf culture and community. While the experience of deafness and Deafhood cannot be replicated by hearing individuals, coming closer to Deaf people's interpretations of life and the child can help hearing individuals understand deaf children from Deaf interpretative systems.

9.3. Implications

Several implications can be drawn from this research.

In considering deaf children's ecology of systems, the fundamental role that the Deaf community plays in offering child, parents and teachers significant insights into the child's experiences needs to be given special consideration. School ecologies require Deaf values and beliefs to create an ecology in which deaf children's development can be nurtured. Clearly, Deaf culture has to penetrate all elements of the curriculum and school life for teachers effectively to construct a Deaf-led school ecology. With this in place the deaf child can develop a Deaf identity and is exposed to a rich bicultural environment.

Teachers' experience in Deaf culture and community contributes significantly to their understanding of the child and of Deaf education. Residence in Deaf host families and

active participation within the community can widen teachers' interpretative systems enabling them to incorporate Deaf values and beliefs. It is important to acknowledge the emotional impact that this experience of cultural immersion/exchange has on hearing teachers. Supporting hearing individuals to dismantle hearing-led interpretations of D/deaf peoples' lives, and construct Deaf frameworks of understanding emerges as a 'key challenge'.

It appears that significant social experiences in the Deaf community and culture would improve hearing teachers' relationships with pupils and their teaching practice in the classroom. Within this framework schools constitute ecological systems in which social and emotional development can be fostered in a natural way. As a result, deaf pupils are able to access a space for well-being promotion. In an indirect way, as part of that school ecology, hearing teachers as members of a cultural group that discovered and worked together in a culture that is not their own (i.e. Deaf culture) offer deaf pupils, positive models of learning a second culture. Hearing teachers become role models in learning the language and skills of the other cultural group (i.e. Deaf) and coping with the emotional dimension of being in a second culture. And in working with Deaf colleagues in school deaf pupils' emotional experience of interacting with the hearing groups could be positively modelled

Hearing people's emotional experience of engaging in Deaf culture cannot be ignored. Divisiveness between hearing and Deaf communities damages deaf children's opportunities for development and well-being. To break the divide between Deaf and hearing communities their different roles and contributions to the life of the child need to be acknowledged. The crucial role of Deaf values and beliefs in creating appropriate ecologies for deaf pupils, as well the significant role that they have in nurturing deaf children is supported by the findings of this research. There is also evidence to support the view that hearing teachers can contribute to deaf children's education by creating Deaf led school ecologies in which they can cope satisfactorily. Pathways for collaboration between both the Deaf community and school need to be considered. In working together, emotional experience of living within Deaf and hearing cultures need to be acknowledged and both Deaf and hearing individuals need to be supported.

Rapport among hearing and Deaf professionals in schools seems to be a key to fluid relationships and effective school ecologies for deaf pupils. Deaf and hearing forums in which understanding of each other's experiences can be gained and rapport can be developed need to be created. These forums may necessitate separate and common spaces

and creative ways to work together as this research suggested that negative and positive emotions could easily be triggered. Collaborative models should be sensitively tailored, considering both Deaf and hearing experiences.

The Deaf community should not only be understood just as a victim of the oppression of hearing societal structures, but also as an emancipated community that has a contribution to make to a hearing-led society (see Chapter 6). The outcome of incorporating Deaf culture to hearing society is significant. Society's awareness of Deaf culture and community promotes information about Deaf people, their language and values that assists in creating ecological systems for future generations of deaf children. A confident Deaf input that explains the implications of a Deaf/visual life can reassure hearing communities, reducing their trepidation of the unknown deaf 'other', as was effectively illustrated in the study of teachers. Creative ways of impacting the macrosystem of our society are the first steps towards a *transforming experiment* (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

9.4. Methodological Contribution

Some methodological implications can also be drawn from this research.

The combined research methods within this dissertation, suggests that quantitative and qualitative research methods can strengthen a research strategy. For instance, using qualitative data to elaborate quantitative research tools, as was the case with the attitude research design, makes a significant contribution to the research as well as to the way attitude scales design is understood. Statements in the scales reproduced ways of thinking as well as talking, by using not only beliefs but also vocabulary in a consistent way. It can be suggested that basing the design of attitudes scales on a qualitative understanding of people's beliefs can boost the validity of quantitative measurement tools.

In addition, this research highlighted the emotional experience of working within two cultures for both Deaf and hearing professionals. In effect, talking about their professional experience is not always an easy task for Deaf and hearing colleagues. Allowing each group separately to reflect on the other's interpretations was an enriching approach to the research. Participants felt more confident/comfortable to express themselves in their own language and from their own emotional experiences. The role of the researcher became crucial in facilitating the dialogue between the two groups while minimising the conflict between Deaf and hearing professionals and distress. This methodology allowed a spiral of understanding to occur through mutual exchange.

9.5. Critical discussion of the research

This research sought to explore teachers' beliefs of deaf pupils. Findings drew on the experiences of a particular group of teachers in an area of Spain. It is, therefore, possible to anticipate that not all teachers working with deaf pupils are represented in the findings. Just as educational provision for deaf pupils is significantly different, for instance, between oral and bilingual-bicultural approaches and its implementations in different school placements (e.g. mainstreaming, special education school) too, so it is possible to expect that within other group of teachers/schools different social representation and construction of deaf pupils might be used.

In turn, while aspects of this thesis may have widespread application, findings still relate to this particular group of teachers. Bilingual-bicultural programmes are not a widespread educational choice available in all areas of Spain. Therefore, the circumstances in which teachers in the study found themselves are the exception, rather than the common panorama of teachers for the deaf in Spain. Still, just a minority of teachers working with deaf pupils are aware of Sign language and Deaf culture.

9.6. Further research

While the findings reflect the experiences of a group of teachers working within Deaf bilingual-bicultural education in Spain it would be valuable to replicate the study with other groups of teachers and professionals working with deaf pupils/people within bilingual-bicultural environments.

The gap in the literature can be perhaps explained in part, by the findings of this research: this area of teachers' role in school seems to be of a significant emotional nature. Therefore, there is a need to explore the importance of emotions as well as knowledge in professionals' training as well as role. Clearly there is much still to be found out about the significance of beliefs, emotion and identity of hearing professionals working with D/deaf population.

Finally, it seems that much work needs still to be done to design ways in which to offer hearing professionals solid Deaf frameworks from which to approach their practice. Deaf led research needs to be carried out to uncover what is a Deaf experience and its implications for hearing professionals working within the Deaf community.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

Description of Schools based on interviews with headteachers (interview questionnaire included)

School 1

The school is located in Madrid, in a small house with a small garden around the building. The school offers infant and junior education for severely and profoundly deaf pupils. This school is a grant school.

This school came from an oralist background. As a result of the mainstreaming policy brought in with the 1982 legislation, deaf children were soon schooled in ordinary schools. In consequence, most of the pupils attending the school were deaf pupils with had other difficulties. Sign Language was not used in the school however one teacher started to use it with pupils who had other difficulties. Staff had big reservations about the introduction of Sign Language in the education of deaf children. The use of signed Spanish spread out too at that time, however teachers were not very clear about its purpose. The real change was triggered in 1991 when the Spanish Association of Deaf celebrated a congress on Deaf identity, and some of the school ex-pupils brought these new perspectives to their attention. In 1994 the school started establishing a bilingual project that has matured much ever since that date.

The educational project of the school is described on paper and by the head of the school as a bilingual-bicultural project where both languages and cultures are seen as essential in the life of deaf children. For this school "deaf people have a right to be bilingual and it is the duty of the school and the teachers to facilitate that right" as the headteacher explained. Sign Language is to the deaf person, what a spoken language is to hearing people. The two languages need to be learnt without neglecting either of them. The school differs from other schools with deaf pupils in many ways as illustrated by the head teacher of the school in an interview. In general terms, the expectations that most schools have for deaf pupils is for deaf pupils to speak. School 1 has worked hard to distance itself from this perspective and look at the deaf child holistically. Their target is hence other. Teachers work in the school with the aim of developing the deaf child holistically to make of them citizens of full right. This has implications for their teaching. Spanish has to be learnt, but to do so they need to learn Sign Language which will give them a sense of identity and belonging to a group of peers that is essential to face education. This perspective is only shared by a minority group of professionals working in the education of deaf children today.

The school has 40 pupils. Most of them are profoundly deaf from birth. The school also has deaf pupils with other disabilities. Pupils come from all over Madrid. Most families

come from middle or low socio-economic backgrounds and in most cases they agree with the school's educational project.

The head of the school incorporated the direction in 1994, having been chosen by her colleagues. Before those years she had been working in the school as speech therapist and teacher. Her adherence to the direction meant a turnabout from oralism towards bilingualism. At present all teachers are professionals in education of deaf children and users of Spanish Sign Language and of the new bilingual methodologies. The hearing staff's background is education and speech therapy and in some cases psychology. The school had deaf members of staff, as deaf classroom assistants with a background in sign language teachers and deaf assistants (diplomas given by the Confederación Nacional de Sordos de España CNSE-national Deaf Association-). In the head of the school's eyes, in spite of the Deaf assistants' limited education they are regarded in the school as any other teacher. Deaf culture is represented and embodied by the work that they develop in school.

The ethos of the school was grounded on acknowledging the difference of deaf children and constructing it in a cultural and positive way. The message that the school wanted to get through was that deaf pupils were different and could succeed in life, communicating in a different language and learning the language used in hearing society.

Deaf and hearing staff working in the school participated in the research. The school opened the doors to the researcher at all times and facilitated the development of this piece of work. Deaf and hearing teachers of the school participated in study two and three. Deaf assistants participated as well in study four.

School 2

This school is situated in the east of Madrid. It is located in the premises of the old National Institute for the Education of the Deaf. On the ground floor of one of the sections of the school, where the workshops for professional training of deaf students were located, a reconversion was done to create this small and cosy infant school for deaf and hearing children from the first months of life to 3 years of ages. This school was set up 5 years prior the research when they were offered the possibility of engaging in a challenging project which involved working in the area of special needs from a completely different perspective.

The educational project guiding the school's work is based on the respect for the deaf child, for their needs and for their rights as children to enjoy their childhood in their own space. The education in this school stands on two main ideas as highlighted by the head of the school in an interview:

- The idea of bilingualism. From this belief, a bilingual education is seen as essential for deaf children. In this regard Sign Language is for deaf children the language that gives them access to the world and to themselves. Also, contemplating difference, at the same time a space is created for the deaf child to feel him/herself as a normal individual.
- The idea of "shared education". This principle advocates the establishment of a single curriculum from which deaf and hearing can benefit at a similar level making the curriculum fully accessible to all of them. In this specific approach they differ from many of the schools with deaf pupils in the country. The objective of the education of deaf children has to be to achieve quality in their education with the same guarantees as is done for other pupils. To do so, schools need to adapt their curriculum making many adaptations to these children, but giving them the chance of developing a single curriculum good for hearing and deaf. Also, teachers need to believe that this is possible and achievable with hard work and effort.

The school has 74 pupils from 0 to 3 years old. Out of this pupils, 15 are deaf pupils from all over the province of Madrid. There are also some hearing children of deaf parents, as deaf parents feel better supported by the school. Families' socio-economic background is middle/low.

The school belonged to a "cooperative" that started working 14 years ago in education. For the past 5 years this group of professionals had been working towards the challenging

experience of creating a bilingual school for deaf children where hearing and deaf could share a curriculum and school experiences. Although before enrolling in this experience they had worked with special needs children, they had never come across deaf pupils and knew nothing about this field of study. The head mistress was elected by her colleagues on the basis of her prior experience in school's direction. The school has 11 teachers specialised in infant education and one deputy. All teachers are Sign Language users. Two of the teachers had worked as interpreters prior their start at the school. The school also counts on three speech therapists. All teachers are from the province of Madrid. They also had one deaf assistant and were looking for a second one to join the team. Deaf assistants were regarded as teachers, although their background is a diploma as Sign Language communicators (given by CNSE). They form part of the staff-room, in the evaluation, meetings and contribution to the programme. For the school, the project would lack coherence without the engagement of deaf assistants as they bring a different perspective to educative issues that sometimes hearing teachers miss. This is not a straightforward process as deaf assistants lack some basic knowledge in education that calls for extra work and support from colleagues.

The ethos of the school is based on respect for deaf pupils, pupils' language, pupils' culture, pupils' differences. Deaf pupils are to be given the possibilities to achieve the same objectives as any other hearing child. Deaf children are children full of potential who will be able to achieve as much as there is a system that supports them. Deaf culture forms part of the school, and team efforts are made to design everything to create a bicultural reality in the school.

This young school was proud and happy to be involved in the research. The school participated in study 1 and 2. Teachers also contributed to piloting study 3. All teachers who took part in the studies were hearing and hard of hearing.

School 3

This school was set up in the year 1800, being one of the oldest schools for the deaf in Europe. The school suffered several changes over the centuries going from a strong oralist tradition to contemporary bilingual approaches. The building where school 3 is located was put up in 1968. It was the biggest residential school for deaf pupils in Spain lodging 600 students approximately. When the research started the school was still a specific school for the deaf. The school had moved from their oralist times to an innovative educational project that was bringing into the big spaces of the deaf school a brand new school for hearing children. The reality of two schools in one single space, culminated in the merging of both schools with hearing and deaf pupils in one single school where deaf pupils are mainstream in certain moments preferably in a group of peers.

Over the last four years since the research started, the school has undergone significant changes, one of which affects the direction of the school. During the period in which research was carried out, the school had two different headteachers. This change in the school's direction influenced the ethos of the school and its practice. However, research focused always on the teachers who worked with the deaf pupils.

The educational project of the school in the year 2000-2001 was the result of a long period of reflection of a professional with an extraordinary history in the field of deaf education. It was also the contribution of a motivated group of professionals who attempted to suggest an innovative alternative to the education of deaf pupils. The project was inspired by the philosophy of providing deaf pupils an environment where they could meet deaf peers and develop their deaf identity through the development of Sign Language and the consequent personal, educational and cultural growth as individuals. At the same time, deaf pupils were offered a hearing environment in which they could develop strategies and experiences with hearing peers. This gave deaf pupils the opportunity of seeing themselves as part of a bigger social system. In regard to the relation of the deaf school with the hearing school, new cultural constructions of deaf pupils were being offered to hearing pupils attempting to produce an impact in their way of seeing deaf people. This could have important implications in the process of a wider social transformation.

The head of the school had been involved in the education of deaf pupils for over 30 years. She herself as a professional in the field, had been in touch with the different approaches to deaf education and had matured her view on deaf pupils and education over

those years of experiences. The result was a project which integrated the strength of the mainstreamed and specific approaches to deaf education. Hearing staff had a background in education, and in some cases psychology. Most of them had some training in speech therapy. There was one deaf teacher whose background was education. The rest of deaf professionals working in the school were deaf assistants, who held diplomas in sign language and Deaf classroom assistants. Deaf assistants were part of the school's life and brought into the school Deaf culture and Sign Language (given by CNSE). These professionals were valued as adult role models for deaf pupils providing a sense of identity and esteem to deaf pupils. However, wider education for deaf assistants was desirable.

The ethos of the school was defined by the belief that a school for deaf pupils had to be a sensitive environment, where teachers needed to accept deaf pupils for who they were, and where teachers would feel at ease teaching these children. For this school the quality of the relationships that were established between pupils and teachers was essential for the well-being of the children as individuals and for the learning process. The school environment needs to respect the deaf child's identity adjusting to the child's needs and giving them the best educational response.

From the school year 2001/2002 the direction of the school changed. The headmistress of the school joined then, seeking a new professional challenge. She had no prior knowledge or experience in the field of deaf education nor in mainstreaming of deaf pupils or other special needs pupils. The new head had experience in directing teams. Although the project that had been initiated by the previous headmistress was to be continued by the new head of the school, the advent of this professional into the school had implications for the ethos of the schools.

The educational project relied on the three pillars that had been established by the previous directions. Despite the bilingual nature of the project that this school is theoretically developing, the contradictions between the philosophy and the school ethos clearly emerged from the interview of the new head of the school. Deaf pupils are understood very much from a medical perspective and the expectations for their school education are reduced to coming to terms to the emotional component of being deaf and acquiring literacy skills. One of the most outstanding indicators in the change in the school ethos was the fact that as the head of the school stated, "she still had not found the time to be able to consider what is deaf culture? What does it mean? And if it really exists?". Deaf assistants are seen in a positive light, as natives in sign language and role

models. However, they are not considered as any other teacher in the school and this can be seen in the lack of contribution in the staff meetings. In turn, it can be said that the ethos of the school changed during the period the research was developed to a more pathologised view of deaf pupils.

School 3 opened their doors once again to the researcher and showed great interest in the research. Teachers in school 3 participated in study 1, 2 and 3. Deaf assistants at the school participated contributed to the piloting of study 3. In addition to this the school did always welcome the researchers when observations needed to be done.

Entrevista directoras – Mayo 2003

(Based on Powers et al. (1999):
A review of good practice in Deaf education,
RNID, London)

1.- ¿Cómo llegaste a ser directora del centro? ¿Cuáles habían sido tus experiencias pasadas? Brevemente

2.- Desde tu punto de vista, ¿cuáles son los objetivos más importantes en la educación de los alumnos sordos?

3.- En tu opinión, **¿Cómo describirías un sistema educativo saludable para los niños y jóvenes sordos?**

4.- ¿Cómo sabes en que momento las cosas están empezando a ir mal en la educación de estos alumnos? ¿Cuáles son **los indicadores de que las cosas no están yendo bien** en la educación de estos alumnos? Cómo lo detectáis?

5.- ¿Cómo es el típico estudiante sordo en tu colegio?

6.- ¿Podrías explicar, brevemente, el proyecto educativo del centro?
Si se habla de bilingüismo:
¿En qué sentido es este centro diferente a otros colegios?
En caso de sí/no
Ejemplos: de vivencias
¿Cómo se vive la cultura de la comunidad sorda en el centro?

7.- Ya por ultimo, ¿cómo definirías as los profesionales sordos que trabajan dentro de las aulas con vuestros alumnos?

APPENDIX 2

Information About Research Project Sent to Schools

BIENESTAR PSICOLÓGICO Y SOCIAL EN LOS ESTUDIANTES SORDOS DE EDUCACIÓN PRIMARIA

Presentación

El bienestar psicológico y social de los estudiantes sordos es un tema que inquieta tanto a sus familias, como a los profesionales que trabajan con ellos (Greenberg and Kusche, 1989; Greenberg,2000; Hindley and Gregory, 1996; Zieziula and Harris, 1998). El desarrollo psicológico del niño sordo ha sido estudiado en profundidad por distintos autores (Marschack, 1993; Marchesi, 1987). Se señala a menudo en ciertos estudios las dificultades que los estudiantes sordos encuentran en sus relaciones sociales con sus iguales, sus problemas ante la toma de decisiones y su baja autoestima, entre otros mcuhos (Marschack, 1993; Zieziula and Harris, 1998; Greenberg and Kusche, 1989). Sin embargo, otras investigaciones han demostrado que esto no siempre es así, y los estudiantes sordos consiguen un adecuado desarrollo psicológico y social (Stone et al., 1999). Los principales agentes de socialización que promueven el desarrollo social de los niños entre los seis y los doce años son la familia, la escuela y los iguales, aunque otros como los medios de comunicación son señalados por distintos autores (Giddens, 1989; Schaffer, 2000). Durante años, el nivel en legua oral y más tarde, las habilidades lecto-escritoras de los alumnos sordos eran el indicador de éxito o fracaso de la escuela en su labor educadora. Sin embargo, hay otros muchos aspectos importantes en la educación de los niños sordos en edad escolar, como su desarrollo social y su bienestar psicológico. (Greenberg,2000; Moores, 1998; Zieziula and Harris, 1998; Schlesinger and Meadow, 1972).

Esta investigación tiene por objeto el estudio del proceso de socialización de los estudiantes dentro de la escuela. Este primer estudio que presentamos a continuación, pretende aproximarse desde una perspectiva general a la realidad de los centros educativos con estudiantes sordos.

Participantes

Cinco centros educativos de la Comunidad de Madrid han sido seleccionados para participar en la investigación. Todos ellos, son centros escolares en los que se imparte Educación Primaria. Todos ellos cuentan con alumnos sordos en sus aulas. En este primer estudio, la población objeto de estudio estará compuesta por profesionales de los centros escolares seleccionados. La información necesaria para el estudio será provista tanto por docentes y educadores que trabajan directamente con estudiantes sordos, como por miembros de los equipos directivos y representantes de la *Asociación de Padres y Madres de Alumnos* del centro.

Objetivos

Los objetivos del primer estudio son los siguientes:

- Recoger información general sobre la naturaleza de los centros.
- Recabar opiniones de los profesionales que trabajan en los centros acerca de los estudiantes sordos.
- Recoger información sobre el papel de los padres y madres de los estudiantes en el centro.

Metodología y Actividades

En el desarrollo del estudio se utilizarán tres distintas actividades:

1. Complementación de cuestionarios
2. Participación en grupos de discusión
3. Desarrollo de entrevistas

1. Complementación de cuestionarios.

El cuestionario que se empleará cuenta con dos partes descritas a continuación:

- *¿Cómo son los alumnos y alumnas sordos?* Este cuestionario ofrece a los participantes la posibilidad de expresar sus opiniones con respecto al trabajo con estudiantes sordos.

2. Participación en grupos de discusión.

En grupos reducidos, algunos profesionales discutirán sobre cómo ven la tarea socializadora de la escuela y su papel profesional dentro de esta institución. Para ello, se llevarán a cabo dos tipos distintos de grupos de discusión.

a. *Grupos homogéneos de profesionales*: Dependiendo de las características del centro se organizarán grupos de discusión con:
    a. Profesores tutores
    b. Logopedas
    c. Educadores de patio
b. *Un grupo heterogéneo de profesionales*. En este caso, el grupo está compuesto por: algún miembro del equipo directivo, dos tutores, dos educadores de patio, dos logopedas y orientador psicopedagógico si lo hubiera.

3. Desarrollo de entrevistas.

Breves entrevistas se llevarán a cabo de manera independiente:

- *Entrevista con un miembro representante del equipo directivo:* En esta breve entrevista se recogen datos básicos sobre la política educativa del centro.

Temporalización

El estudio se llevará a cabo a partir del 7 al 24 de Mayo de 2001 en Madrid.

Confidencialidad

Todos los datos confiados a los miembros del equipo de investigación serán empleados exclusivamente con fines académicos. Asimismo, en ningún momento será revelada la identidad de los centros o de los participantes en la investigación.

APPENDIX 3

Attitude scale

Bienestar Psicológico y Social en los Estudiantes Sordos de Educación Primaria

María Gascón Ramos

Centre for Deaf Studies

University of Bristol

¿Cómo son los alumnos y alumnas sord@s?

El siguiente cuestionario intenta recoger tu opinión sobre información general sobre cómo son los estudiantes sordos[1] y cómo es el trabajo en la escuela con ellos. **NO EXISTEN RESPUESTAS CORRECTAS O INCORRECTAS A ESTE CUESTIONARIO.**

Muy en Desacuerdo	Desacuerdo	Algo en desacuerdo	Algo de acuerdo	Acuerdo	Muy de acuerdo
1	2	3	4	5	6

1.	Me preocupa el avance en el currículo y la dificultad para programar. Yo diría que se debe a la falta de un currículo especial para los estudiantes sordos que contemple el aprendizaje de su propia lengua, de otras lenguas, de contenidos especiales,...	1	2	3	4	5	6
2.	Para los alumnos sordos la lengua de signos es un sistema de signos que, como cualquier otro, puede ser beneficioso eventualmente pero, por lo general, entorpece el desarrollo del lenguaje.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3.	El estigma social asociado a la sordera se debe a que los sordos no se esfuerzan por vencer su discapacidad.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4.	El desarrollo de la identidad en el estudiante sordo será más o menos satisfactorio dependiendo del contacto que llegue a establecer con su comunidad sorda con la que comparte una lengua, unos valores, una historia,... en definitiva una experiencia de vida común.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5.	Si pudiera introducir un cambio para conseguir mayores éxitos en la educación de los estudiantes sordos este sería recuperar las logopedias y las horas de apoyo.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6.	Los estudiantes sordos pueden llegar tan lejos como sus habilidades en lengua oral les permitan.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7.	El proyecto curricular de los centros con alumnos sordos debería ser diseñado principalmente por personas sordas contemplando las necesidades educativas de su comunidad cultural, al mismo tiempo que incluye el currículo de la comunidad mayoritaria (oyente).	1	2	3	4	5	6
8.	La relación con los estudiantes sordos es en parte diferente a la que se establece con otro tipo de alumnos porque su lectura labial a menudo no es buena y, por tanto, es difícil comunicar con ellos.	1	2	3	4	5	6
9.	Ocasionalmente, algunos estudiantes sordos se pelean porque es parte de su discapacidad como sordos. Son más agresivos.	1	2	3	4	5	6
10.	Los profesionales que trabajan en los colegios necesitan mayor formación e información sobre los procesos de aprendizaje en los alumnos sordos para que el rendimiento de sus alumnos mejore.	1	2	3	4	5	6

[1] A lo largo de todo el cuestionario nos referimos con el término "sordo" a estudiantes que tienen una sordera profunda o moderada.

11.	Algunos estudiantes sordos a menudo se muestran desmotivados porque se rinden muy fácilmente. Se les ha acostumbrado a que todo son ayudas en casa, en el colegio,... y se acomodan. Es una pena que se venzan tan rápidamente, con lo poquito que pueden aprender.	1	2	3	4	5	6
12.	La cultura y la comunidad sorda surge como resultado al proceso de búsqueda de identidad y sentimiento de pertenencia a un grupo de iguales sordos desde donde afrontar el mundo.	1	2	3	4	5	6
13.	Diseñar y realizar las actividades adecuadas para trabajar con alumnos sordos es cansado. Tienen que ser muy sencillas y repetirlas muchas veces para que lleguen a entender algo.	1	2	3	4	5	6
14.	Para los alumnos sordos la lengua de signos es su lengua natural y como cualquier otra tiene potencialidades y limitaciones.	1	2	3	4	5	6
15.	Los estudiantes sordos son igual de inquietos y agresivos que el resto de los chicos y chicas de su edad.	1	2	3	4	5	6
16.	La relación de los estudiantes sordos con adultos sordos es necesaria ya que esto facilita procesos de identificación con adultos iguales que les sirven de modelos. Además les abre las puertas a una comunidad cultural con valores, historia, arte, ... propios.	1	2	3	4	5	6
17.	Cuando los estudiantes sordos abandonan la escuela primaria me preocupa más su nivel de comprensión/expresión en lengua oral que el grado de desarrollo de sus habilidades sociales.	1	2	3	4	5	6
18.	La educación de los estudiantes sordos es una ardua tarea para profesoras y profesores de primaria porque la falta de audición supone un problema añadido al, ya de por sí, complejo desarrollo de cada individuo.	1	2	3	4	5	6
19.	Los estudiantes sordos prefieren permanecer con compañeros sordos. Es un mero hecho de desarrollo social: mejoran sus habilidades sociales y desarrollan un sentimiento de seguridad en sí mismos.	1	2	3	4	5	6
20.	El éxito en la escolarización de los alumnos sordos radica en el empleo de profesores sordos y oyentes con una perspectiva bicultural de su educación.	1	2	3	4	5	6
21.	Algunos alumnos sordos en algún momento se siente tristes, abatidos, ... desmotivados, en definitiva. En principio, no hay que alarmarse porque a todos los chicos y chicas les pasa.	1	2	3	4	5	6
22.	La causa principal del rendimiento de los estudiantes sordos es que los programas no se adaptan a las necesidades culturales del alumnado y aspectos básicos como la utilización de su lengua natural como lengua de acceso al currículo no se contemplan.	1	2	3	4	5	6
23.	El desarrollo de la identidad en el estudiante sordo será más o menos satisfactorio dependiendo del adecuado proceso de socialización en el que haya estado inmerso y por tanto, del desarrollo de sus habilidades sociales, personales, cognitivas,...	1	2	3	4	5	6
24.	Algunos estudiantes sordos, ocasionalmente, se pelean porque tienen problemas de autocontrol debido a su sordera. Es cierto que esta es una de las cosas en las que se ve una gran diferencia con los oyentes.	1	2	3	4	5	6
25.	La relación de los estudiantes sordos con los adultos oyentes es provechosa porque la sociedad, mayoritariamente es oyente. El contacto con personas oyentes les da más oportunidades de superar su problema desarrollando la lengua oral y mejorando su lectura labial.	1	2	3	4	5	6
26.	El proyecto curricular de los centros con alumnos sordos debería basarse en los currículos de los centros de educación especial donde los objetivos ya están adaptados a las limitaciones de los alumnos.	1	2	3	4	5	6

27.	Los estudiantes sordos pueden llegar tan lejos como se propongan.	1	2	3	4	5	6
28.	La relación con los estudiantes sordos es en parte diferente a la que se establece con otro tipo de alumnos porque en su caso, no es solo una relación educativa sino un encuentro entre culturas regido por normas y valores distintos, que caracterizan esta interacción.	1	2	3	4	5	6
29.	El estigma social asociado a la sordera está relacionado con la falta de entendimiento de la cultura y la comunidad sorda como ocurre con otros grupos culturales minoritarios.	1	2	3	4	5	6
30.	Los estudiantes sordos son más inquietos y agresivos que el resto.	1	2	3	4	5	6
31.	La lengua de signos es un instrumento para construir conocimiento.	1	2	3	4	5	6
32.	La relación de los estudiantes sordos con los adultos oyentes es provechosa porque a través de ese contacto desarrollan habilidades para integrarse en la sociedad mayoritaria.	1	2	3	4	5	6
33.	La educación de los estudiantes sordos es una ardua tarea para profesoras y profesores de primaria porque cada niño es un mundo, el desarrollo de uno no tiene nada que ver con el otro, por lo que hay que estar muy atentos a las necesidades de cada alumno.	1	2	3	4	5	6
34.	El desarrollo de la identidad en el estudiante sordo será más o menos satisfactorio dependiendo del grado de comprensión y aceptación de su discapacidad y de sus habilidades para comunicarse en lengua oral con la sociedad.	1	2	3	4	5	6
35.	Los estudiantes sordos prefieren permanecer con compañeros sordos que con compañeros oyentes porque existe una diferencia cultural importante (idioma, en las pautas de interacción,...).	1	2	3	4	5	6
36.	Los sordos adultos que se han integrado satisfactoriamente en la sociedad deben su éxito a que se han definido culturalmente, asimilando las dos culturas, o renunciando una de ellas. Desarrollando una identidad social y cultural desde la que enfrentarse al mundo.	1	2	3	4	5	6
37.	Si pudiera introducir un cambio para conseguir mayores éxitos en la educación de los estudiantes sordos este sería incorporar proyectos biculturales/bilingües, y un equipo directivo y profesorado sordo y oyente competente en la cultura natural de los sordos.	1	2	3	4	5	6
38.	Diseñar y realizar las actividades adecuadas a menudo es muy frustrante porque los estudiantes sordos no se enteran. Las actividades no son el problema realmente, sino más bien que, ni con lectura labial, ni con sistemas alternativos les puedes explicar lo que hay que hacer.	1	2	3	4	5	6
39.	Los estudiantes sordos debido a su discapacidad tiene muchas dificultades para controlar sus impulsos y esto hace que desde niños sean más inquietos y agresivos.	1	2	3	4	5	6
40.	El éxito en la escolarización de los alumnos sordos radica en el empleo de profesores de apoyo y personal auxiliar especializado con dominio de sistemas alternativos de comunicación, como bimodal o cued-speech.	1	2	3	4	5	6
41.	Cuando los estudiantes sordos abandonan la escuela primaria lo que más me preocupa es el grado de asimilación de su propia identidad y todos los componentes socio-culturales que de este hecho se derivan, para convivir satisfactoriamente en una sociedad multicultural.	1	2	3	4	5	6
42.	La relación con los estudiantes sordos es en parte diferente a la que se establece con otro tipo de alumnos porque mantienen actitudes infantiles durante un mayor periodo de tiempo.	1	2	3	4	5	6

43.	La relación de los estudiantes sordos con adultos sordos les ofrece modelos de adultos que conviven con oyentes, tienen una profesión, una familia, ... y les da una idea de cómo es la vida de un sordo adulto.	1	2	3	4	5	6
44.	Los sordos adultos que se han integrado satisfactoriamente en la sociedad deben su éxito al apoyo social que las personas discapacitadas reciben de la sociedad.	1	2	3	4	5	6
45.	Me preocupa el avance en el currículo y la dificultad para programar, yo diría que se debe a los estudiantes sordos no progresan al mismo ritmo que los otros. Si ya es difícil cumplir las exigencias curriculares con los oyentes, con los sordos resulta impensable dada su discapacidad.	1	2	3	4	5	6
46.	El estigma social asociado a la sordera está relacionado con las habilidades de las personas sordas para comunicarse con efectividad en el mundo.	1	2	3	4	5	6
47.	La emergencia de la cultura y la comunidad sorda es un fenómeno social de marginación o aislamiento como consecuencia natural a la falta de integración de un grupo de personas que comparten unas limitaciones personales como es la falta de la lengua oral, lengua escrita, formación académica, ... es algo similar a un gueto.	1	2	3	4	5	6
48.	Para los alumnos sordos la lengua de signos puede ser un apoyo eventual que pronto debe ser sustituido por la lengua oral.	1	2	3	4	5	6
49.	La emergencia de la cultura y la comunidad sorda es un fenómeno social y cultural debido a una experiencia vital diferente compartida por un grupo de personas y conlleva una forma particular de entender la comunicación, los valores sociales, la historia, el folklore...	1	2	3	4	5	6
50.	Los estudiantes sordos pueden llegar tan lejos como su discapacidad les permita.	1	2	3	4	5	6
51.	La relación de los estudiantes sordos con adultos sordos les viene bien para entender lo importante que son sus habilidades de la lengua oral en su vida de adultos.	1	2	3	4	5	6
52.	Los estudiantes sordos prefieren permanecer con compañeros sordos porque los estudiantes sordos son muy cerrados. Son muy cómodos y no se esfuerzan por integrarse. No hay que olvidar que los sordos tiene muchos problemas de socialización.	1	2	3	4	5	6
53.	El proyecto curricular de los centros con alumnos sordos debería basarse en el mismo currículo que siguen los alumnos oyentes, pero persiguiendo un número limitado de objetivos.	1	2	3	4	5	6
54.	La emergencia de la cultura y la comunidad sorda es una reacción de autodefensa ante un mundo en el que debido a su discapacidad no llegan a integrarse. De alguna manera esos argumentos alivian el peso de la discapacidad.	1	2	3	4	5	6
55.	Los alumnos sordos deben ser escolarizados en centros educativos con programas educativos reducidos.	1	2	3	4	5	6
56.	Si pudiera introducir un cambio para conseguir mayores éxitos en la educación de los estudiantes sordos este sería emplear un mayor número de profesionales sordos y oyentes formados especialmente para adaptarse a las necesidades de estos alumnos.	1	2	3	4	5	6
57.	La educación de los estudiantes sordos es una ardua tarea para profesoras y profesores de primaria porque la discrepancia cultural entre el alumnado y los docentes hace que los procesos educativos supongan un reto para ambos.	1	2	3	4	5	6
58.	Diseñar y realizar las actividades adecuadas a menudo es muy complicado. Siempre hay un pequeño problema de comunicación profesor-alumno, pero en sí, no supone un obstáculo para el aprendizaje de mis alumnos.	1	2	3	4	5	6

59.	La lengua de signos es una herramienta de soporte para el aprendizaje de la lengua oral	1	2	3	4	5	6
60.	Cuando los estudiantes sordos abandonan la escuela primaria lo que más me preocupa es su nivel de lengua oral.	1	2	3	4	5	6
61.	La lengua de signos es el vehículo de difusión de una cultura minoritaria.	1	2	3	4	5	6
62.	La causa principal del rendimiento de los estudiantes sordos es que el alumno sordo tarda muchos años en adquirir las destrezas necesarias para manejarse en lengua oral, a pesar de los soportes en la comunicación que podamos emplear.	1	2	3	4	5	6
63.	Los sordos adultos que se han integrado satisfactoriamente en la sociedad deben su éxito al desarrollo de sus capacidades lingüísticas, cognitivas, sociales, ... y no a la inteligibilidad de su habla.	1	2	3	4	5	6
64.	La relación con los estudiantes sordos es en parte diferente a la que se establece con otro tipo de alumnos porque su discapacidad les condena de alguna manera a desarrollar un lenguaje muy pobre y poco efectivo para comunicarse, y esto evidentemente es un handicap para establecer relaciones.	1	2	3	4	5	6
65.	El éxito en la escolarización de los alumnos sordos radica en el tratamiento logopédico.	1	2	3	4	5	6
66.	Me preocupa el avance en el currículo y la dificultad para programar. Yo diría que se debe evidentemente, a que nuestro progreso en el currículo es significativamente más lento porque nuestros alumnos tienen muchas dificultades para progresar en el currículo.	1	2	3	4	5	6
67.	La relación de los estudiantes sordos con los adultos oyentes es positiva porque es la única manera de que asuman su problema y lleguen a integrarse en la sociedad. Rodearles de sordos es un engaño, ya que se les intenta proteger de la realidad de su discapacidad.	1	2	3	4	5	6
68.	Algunos estudiantes sordos a menudo se muestran desmotivados porque la escuela no entiende las necesidades de estos estudiantes y cuando lo hace no tiene medios ni recursos para cubrir sus necesidades. Los alumnos que se sienten incomprendidos y a disgusto.	1	2	3	4	5	6
69.	Cuando los estudiantes sordos abandonan la escuela primaria lo que más me preocupa es su nivel de desarrollo evolutivo y todo lo que de ello se desprende como su desarrollo cognitivo, social, lingüístico, ...	1	2	3	4	5	6
70.	Algunos estudiantes sordos, ocasionalmente, se pelean. Parece que es una cuestión de madurez de determinadas habilidades de autocontrol y resolución de conflictos interpersonales, en definitiva, de habilidades sociales, más que del hecho de ser sordo.	1	2	3	4	5	6
71.	Los sordos adultos que se han integrado satisfactoriamente en la sociedad deben su éxito a sus habilidades para comunicarse en lengua oral.	1	2	3	4	5	6
72.	La educación de los estudiantes sordos es una ardua tarea para profesoras y profesores de primaria porque la atención, el tiempo, los cuidados... que necesita un estudiante sordo debido a su discapacidad son mucho mayores.	1	2	3	4	5	6
73.	El éxito en la escolarización de los alumnos sordos radica en el uso de los implantes cocleares, las prótesis y los amplificadores de señal acústica.	1	2	3	4	5	6
74.	El estigma social asociado a la sordera está relacionado con la escasa tolerancia de la sociedad ante las diferencias personales de los individuos, en general.	1	2	3	4	5	6
75.	La relación de los estudiantes sordos con adultos sordos les ayuda a entender mejor las consecuencias que se derivan de su perdida auditiva.	1	2	3	4	5	6
76.	Los estudiantes sordos no creo que sean especialmente ni inquietos ni agresivos, pero es cierto que las circunstancias en las que viven provoca a veces que respondan con mayor agresividad.	1	2	3	4	5	6

77.	La causa principal del rendimiento de los estudiantes sordos es que la discapacidad auditiva conlleva consecuencias irremediables en los alumnos en todos los niveles de su desarrollo.	1	2	3	4	5	6
78.	Algunos estudiantes sordos a menudo se muestran desmotivados porque se dan cuenta que sus esfuerzos no dan fruto. Llega un momento donde se dan cuenta de que son "diferentes".	1	2	3	4	5	6
79.	Los estudiantes sordos prefieren permanecer con compañeros sordos que con compañeros oyentes porque prefieren aislarse antes que esforzarse para hacerse entender.	1	2	3	4	5	6
80.	El proyecto curricular de los centros con alumnos sordos debería ser el mismo que el de los alumnos oyentes de su misma edad.	1	2	3	4	5	6
81.	Diseñar y realizar las actividades adecuadas a menudo es un reto. Me resulta tremendamente difícil entender el mundo y los aprendizajes en términos meramente visuales. No se trata únicamente de un cambio de idioma.	1	2	3	4	5	6
82.	Para los alumnos sordos la lengua de signos es una lengua más útil tanto para transmitir y construir conocimiento como para expresarse, que otros sistemas alternativos de comunicación como el bimodal.	1	2	3	4	5	6
83.	La lengua de signos es un obstáculo para el aprendizaje de la lengua oral.	1	2	3	4	5	6
84.	El desarrollo de la identidad en el estudiante sordo será más o menos satisfactorio dependiendo del nivel de legua oral que sea capaz de desarrollar para ser aceptado en nuestra sociedad.	1	2	3	4	5	6
85.	Ocasionalmente, algunos estudiantes sordos se pelean porque su experiencia escolar es tremendamente frustrante. Este hecho no está vinculado a la sordera, sino a ser sordo en una sociedad mayoritariamente oyente que no cubre adecuadamente sus necesidades.	1	2	3	4	5	6
86.	Los estudiantes sordos pueden llegar tan lejos como cualquier otra persona.	1	2	3	4	5	6
87.	La relación de los estudiantes sordos con los adultos oyentes es positiva porque de ellos aprenden su segunda lengua, las costumbres sociales y la cultura de la sociedad mayoritaria y pueden comparar con las propias normas y valores,... de su propia comunidad.	1	2	3	4	5	6
88.	Los alumnos sordos deben ser escolarizados en centros educativos con programas educativos biculturales.	1	2	3	4	5	6
89.	En cuanto al avance en el currículo y la dificultad para programar no creo que vayamos ni más, ni menos atrasados que en otros colegios de oyentes.	1	2	3	4	5	6
90.	Si pudiera introducir un cambio para conseguir mayores éxitos en la educación de los estudiantes sordos este sería implantar a todos los niños sordos e integrarles desde pequeños en colegios de oyentes, con sus necesarias horas de logopedia.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Fecha de nacimiento: _____ Sexo: _____ Profesión/Estudios _____

☐ Sordo ☐ Oyente ¿Te interesa el trabajo con personas sordas? Sí No

Muchas gracias por tu colaboración.

APPENDIX 4

Vignette Description – Study 4

Implication of a Visual life experience: visual language more evident example					
Name	**Situation**	**Deaf value vs hearing value**	**What is happening?**		**Next**
1. - Didactics (might work)	In a class a hearing teacher is explaining the equilateral triangle. She signs an equilateral triangle and then explains the properties (3 equal sides).	▪ Visual culture	**Teacher**	I find difficulty in explaining geometry.	▪ Why is this happening? ▪ Why could the students feel puzzled?
			Student	The deaf students after a while are puzzled with all the explanation and they don't understand why she keeps repeating the same stuff again and again	
			Conflict	The nature of the visual language already gives information about the shape, and properties. So, a sole image is replacing an explanation.	
2.-Hearing teachers intrude	Staff meet deaf students in corridors and ask direct questions in SL.	Privacy Visual language	**Teachers**	You stop them in the corridor and ask for some information about something that has happened to them and they get so angry sometimes. You just want to care.	▪ Is this appropriate? ▪ Why not?
			Students	They do not understand. Sometimes I don't want my friends or other member of staff to know my business. They ask me and then everybody knows	
			Conflict	Teachers use SI and do not realise that with oral language there is some privacy as sound can be controlled but in a visual code everything is exposed.	

Peer group reference group					
Name	**Situation**	**Deaf value vs hearing value**	**What is happening?**		**Next**
3.- Subject preference (Not sure that it will work)	A deaf student goes to see the counsellor of the school. She explains that she would like to stay in class during the science class. Instead she has to go to speech therapy. She likes the teacher in speech therapy and other days there is no problem in going. She also admits that the therapy is OK, but, feels that knowing about science is more useful for her.	▪ Value of information ▪ Lack of relevance of hearing ways of communication	**Teacher**	They have to go to speech therapy as part of the programme. We are not obsessed by speaking skills but it will be useful for them in the future. It is difficult to make them realise about this.	▪ What is the deaf student's point? ▪ Why is she really complaining? ▪ Why would be speech therapy regarded as more useful?
			Student	I am not so much interested in speaking better, I sign to my friends. I am more interested in getting information that I can share use, exchange with my friends. I want to know things!	
			Conflict	Teachers see that developing speech will help then in the future. What about acquiring the same level of information? Students are interested in learning what they can use in their daily life, with their friends, so that they are connected to their group. They do not want to miss information. It is like being left out of the group.	
4.- Peer help (will work)	In a class a teacher is explaining. Suddenly one of the students ask another classmate a question about the explanation. This one explains.	▪ Collectivism ▪ Sharing of information	**Teacher**	Lack of discipline of pupils makes it impossible for the teacher to do her work. They don't abide by the norms and the class just becomes a commotion of students talking to each other.	▪ Why do deaf students prefer to ask a class mate for further explanation? ▪ How does the teacher feel? ▪ Conferences in deaf clubs.
			Students	Are used to learning from each other. They feel the need for sharing the information with classmates whenever they understand something.	
			Conflict	▪ In hearing contexts passing on information in some class contexts can be seen as cheating. ▪ Also there are moments when some independent learning is demanded from the students.	

Language and power relations					
Name	**Situation**	**Deaf value vs hearing value**	**What is happening?**		**Next**
5.- Punishments	When teachers need to reprimand the students they threaten to stop signing and start talking to them	▪ Visual language	**Teacher**	I am not going to make an effort for someone that is not interested in learning.	▪ Is this acceptable? ▪ Why?
			Students	I feel so bad when they stop signing, it is so frustrating. You are left out, rejected, I feel bad. So, most of the time I close my eyes in response.	
			Conflict	Signing is considered as granting them a favour not a right of the deaf student. The student feels hurt as s/he knows his/her basic right to communication has been abused. S/he feels helpless.	

Environments' ecology and SL/hearing aids policy: naturalism vs normalisation					
Name	**Situation**	**Deaf value vs hearing value**	**What is happening?**		**Next**
6.- Hearing aids	Students in signed class or playground (deaf peers) do not want to wear the CI or HA	• Lack of relevance of sound in a deaf oriented environment	**Teacher**	It is important to wear the HA to get used to hear, educate their hearing,...	Is there a need in a signed environment to use the CI? Is the CI something to use selectively depending on circumstances?
			Students	In a deaf oriented environment information is registered by eyes the hearing input is ignored and adds no information.	
			Conflict	Sound is important and deaf children must learn to take advantage of it in all circumstances. However, there are circumstances where sound is absolutely ignored.	
7.- Signing environment	A teacher knocks and goes into a class. She says something to the teacher and this one answers orally. Then she leaves.	• Right to be informed. • SL as the natural language in a deaf environment	**Teacher**	I signed in the class, when they approach me in the corridor, they are lying... we signed all the time.	
			Students	We see them chatting (oral) in corridors,... and never know what they are saying. They chat all the time.	
			Conflict	For a hearing teacher sign is used to communicate with a deaf person not as an essential component of a deaf environment. When two hearing teachers meet they do not feel the need to sign as they are not deaf. However they ignore the fact that they are in a deaf environment and therefore not signing is against deaf students incidental learning of social skills,... and general access to information	
8.- Students share individual info in SL when coming back to class	Student has been out of the class and incorporates to the lesson in the middle of the teachers explanation. S/he starts telling friends where	High context vs low context Information	**Teacher**	They come in late and on top of that they start telling the other where they were, what have they done... They have no respect. They stop the class and it takes us 10 mins to catch up again.	• Why does the student feel the need to tell the others what has he
			Students	Student I feel like telling my friends where I was as they might be wondering because I couldn't tell before, or they are interested.	

	he was despite the teacher explaining.		**Conflict**	Hearing teacher does not feel it important to catch up immediately to include the student. It will be quicker to finish and then explain individually. The student on the contrary needs to feel included in the group dynamic, not providing the necessary information (tense, subject,...) for him/her to catch up does not allow him/her to understand and information is therefore not shared. When asking another mate, there is an natural commitment to share the information.	been doing? ▪ How does the teacher feel? ▪ Is it appropriate?
9. Urge for information	Students see teachers on corridor and ask them direct questions that might be regarded as inappropriate by teachers	▪ Information ▪ Straight fowardness	**Teachers**	They ask you so many questions in the corridor most of them rude...	
			Student	We want to know and we ask. They know they should tell us. They are our teachers. There is nothing wrong in asking.	
			Conflict	Deaf students lack of info in most cases makes them exploit the resources when they have them around. Teachers feel it is too demanding, because they could stay all day answering questions in the corridor.	
10.- Impolite remarks	Students make comments and remarks about teachers in an open and direct way	Politeness Bonding, friendship Secrecy	**Teacher**	They are so rude sometimes. They approach you and just say "you are fatter", "I don't like you hair, shirt,...", other times they are nice and they compliment too "you are nice today", "like your shoes",...	
			Students	I like to tell my teacher what I feel. What I like, I don't like. I feel close to her, but sometimes they complain I am rude and I get into trouble.	
			Conflict	Deaf value not having secrets among themselves (yes from hearing people they may not trust), they enrol in straightforward communication, and feel closer when they can say what they think about a friend. Hearing believe that there are things that you'd rather keep to yourself and not say, although you might think it and share it with others in secret but never share it with the person directly as it can hurt them.	

Mixing up: engaging with the community					
Name	**Situation**	**Deaf value vs hearing value**	**What is happening?**		**Next**
11.- Teachers in the community	Two deaf teachers attend an event in the deaf club. After the show they leave.	• Collectivism vs individualism	**Teacher**	In my leisure time I like to spend time like to come to the club and assist with conferences or pantomimes, plays,... I enjoy. I like to get involved with deaf culture.	Is this appropriate?
			Adults	Hearing come, come, and they just take things. They never stay in the club after the events, never get involved ... I mean leaving something in the community.	
			Conflict	Involvement and engagement is understood in different ways. For hearing teachers enjoying deaf art, and spending some hours every weekend signing in the club is getting involved and evidence of their good attitude. For a deaf adult, hearing come to the club to take things away, they see what they are interested in and they leave, they do not share information, experiences,...they do not commit (long term relations, answer personal questions).	
12. Teacher - deaf adult relation	A teacher while in the deaf club is asked by a good looking young deaf man to go out for dinner.	• Collectivism vs individualism	**Teacher**	I think I already have enough deaf in my life. Five days a week in the school and sometimes on weekends. I do not think that I have more energy to get involved in deeper relations with deaf men. It is like being at school on my free time.	
			Adults	They do not really like to know deaf people deeply. They are not interested in true relationships, becoming part of the community and therefore understanding what it is like being deaf, the importance of the group, deaf peers, feeling of belonging to a community . They might say that they have an open attitude, but they are not ready to form part of the community, They don't really want to know how a deaf person is and I cannot imagine how they are able to understand how to bring up a deaf child if they hardly know a deaf man as an adult, what they need, what they want, what is important in their life, what is missing.	

13.- Teacher – parent in deaf club	A teacher attending a deaf club event meets families of her students at school	• Collectivism vs individualism	**Teacher**	When I go to the club I want to have a good time. See the students or enjoy the event, my business and I leave. I know that they stay for hours but I have a personal life to care for.	
			Parents	What I do not understand is how can they pass through our values, the values of deaf community to other deaf children with hearing parents. They are somehow responsible for that, as deaf people have little opportunities to become teachers. For this reason they have to engage, commit to the community. They think that sharing a couple of hours every Friday night is enough, I know deaf community, deaf people, their culture and values, … It is not true. They are not prepared to establish long term relations, share their lives with us, devote time and energy to promote welfare of the group. At the end of the day they have a "9 to 5" attitude.	
			Conflict	Teachers contemplate socialising with deaf adults as part of their job. It is related to their professional identity. However, their personal life is out of the club and private. However to the deaf adults teachers in order to understand what a deaf person is like need to become part of the community, commit in relationships with deaf adults, so that they can pass on values	